



## **POSITION STATEMENT**

**Bill:** HB 1511 Forest Conservation Act – Modifications

**Position:** Support

**Date:** March 26, 2024

**Contact:** Debra Borden, General Counsel

Jordan Baucum Colbert, Government Affairs Liaison

Dear Chair Brian J. Feldman and Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan,

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC or “the Commission”) initially voted to support this bill with amendments. The sponsor has since made a needed revision to this bill that would keep the July 2024 effective date for Forest Mitigation Banking provisions to continue. The Commission respectfully requests that the Education, Energy and Environment committee consider this information and include it in the record with a favorable report.

**What this bill Does.** This bill requires the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to update a certain model local government ordinance and adopt certain regulations relating to Forest Conservation on or before certain dates. **As amended this bill seeks to include language that would keep the effective dates to allow current forest mitigation banking applications to go into effect in July 2024 as planned.**

**Continued Effort to Support Modification to the Forest Conservation Act (FCA).** Last 2023 Legislative Session, the Commission worked with the sponsor and alongside various counties in Maryland to help implement updates to the FCA. The Commission’s goals aligned with modifying the state’s policy to encourage the retention and sustainable management of forest lands. One of our top priorities involved ensuring forest mitigation banking provisions were protected. The recent amendments to this bill reflect the Commission’s efforts and recommendations.

For these reasons, the Commission requests the Committee vote favorable on HB 1511.