



## MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY PARK & RECREATION ADMINISTRATORS (MACPRA)

### **HB717 Natural Resources – Public Lands – Acquisition, Staffing, Operations and Funding**

March 21, 2025

#### **MACPRA Position: SUPPORT**

The Maryland Association of County Park and Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) supports HB717 altering provisions of law regarding the Department of Natural Resources acquisition of real property and establishing a Land and Property Management Program in the Department. In addition to the benefits provided to the State Park system, the bill, as written, provides additional flexibility to Counties for how Program Open Space funds can be utilized, which is a high priority of County recreation and park professionals. This flexibility better equips Counties to address local needs for acquisition and/or development projects that enhance quality of life in the communities that we serve.

During the bill's introduction in the House, MACPRA proposed two amendments which have been incorporated into the bill language. These amendments provide additional efficiency and flexibility to the Counties when utilizing Program Open Space funds, which enhances an already strong bill.

MACPRA strongly supports the passing of HB 717 and urges the Senate Committee to give a favorable recommendation. Thank you for your consideration.

*The Maryland Association of County Park & Recreation Administrators (MACPRA) is an affiliate of the Maryland Association of Counties and represents the Parks and Recreation departments of all 23 counties and Baltimore City – the professionals engaged in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services throughout Maryland.*