

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 255

(Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee)(By
Request - Departmental - Natural Resources)

Environment and Transportation

**Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program -
Alterations**

This departmental bill alters the stated purpose of the Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program, administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), by (1) focusing the program's purpose on "the advancement of forest health and resilience" and (2) expanding the program's scope to include promotion and maintenance of native trees and shrubs (on public lands, community open spaces, school grounds, and rights-of-way) in addition to the already-authorized planting of native trees and shrubs in those spaces.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill only alters the purposes for which existing donated/granted funds may be used. The expanded scope of the program under the bill may affect the timing of deployment of existing funds, but does not otherwise directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: DNR has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). The Department of Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: Chapter 129 of 2012 established the Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program in statute for the purpose of planting native trees and shrubs on public lands, community open spaces, school grounds, and rights-of-way. The program is funded by donations and grants received by DNR. The department is authorized to seek, accept, and expend donations and grants for the implementation and administration of the program.

Background: DNR indicates that the bill improves the department's ability to deploy program funds, enabling the Maryland Forest Service to address forest management needs beyond planting and deliver a range of resources in support of statewide forest conservation.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: SB 164 (Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Natural Resources) - Education, Energy, and the Environment.

Information Source(s): Department of Natural Resources; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 22, 2026
sj/sdk

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program - Alterations

BILL NUMBER: HB 255

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PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

X WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND
SMALL
BUSINESS

OR

 WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL
BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

This proposal is not expected to have a significant impact on small businesses.