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Ways and Means Committee

Education Subcommittee

Finance Resources Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

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**Support HB 458 – Program Open Space – Local Projects – Visitor Behavior Policies**

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of HB 458. This bill requires each jurisdiction to provide a copy of an official policy of best practices of ethical park behavior for visitors to parks and natural areas as a requirement for receiving Project Open Space funding. These policies should address guidelines to limit damage of natural areas, limit trash pollution of natural areas and waterways, limit the disturbance of wildlife, and educate the public in basic trail curtesy. Often these policies are left to individual parks. This inconsistency of guidance creates confusion and in some cases, no guidance at all. Requiring that jurisdictions create these policies in order to access Project Open Space funds will help create a culture of stewardship for our parks and natural areas. The recent shutdown has shown us the value of our parks and open spaces, but it has also led to a great deal of damage and destruction to them as numbers of visitors, many of them first-time visitors, have increased dramatically.

Thank you for your support of HB 458 to encourage counties to protect the precious resources that are purchased through Project Open Space funds.

Sincerely,

Delegate Michele Guyton