



Date: February 24, 2021

Bill: HB 1133- Tree Planting – Urban Trees Program and Commission for the Innovation and Advancement of Carbon Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings

Position: Support

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **House Bill 1133- Tree Planting – Urban Trees Program and Commission for the Innovation and Advancement of Carbon Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings**, which will help reverse the inequities in urban tree cover throughout the state and takes steps towards establishing a Maryland-based carbon offset market to support more tree plantings.

Trees play a fundamental role in regulating city microclimates — filtering air pollution, improving water quality, providing shade, capturing carbon, as well as reducing the urban heat island effect. Additionally, urban trees can deliver improved health and mental health outcomes and increase property values.

In 2018, the National Aquarium contributed to a study examining the urban heat island effect in Washington, D.C., Richmond, Virginia, and Baltimore City. The results suggested that the urban microclimate was highly variable across all of these cities—with differences of up to 10°C between coolest and warmest locations at the same time—and that these air temperatures were primarily dependent on underlying landscape features¹. Disparities in the maximum air temperatures were amplified by dense, sparsely vegetated urban cores. Volunteers in the study observed a relationship between lower income areas and the lack of heat mitigating features, including trees and open space.

By passing HB 1133, Maryland would be taking important steps towards creating a cleaner, healthier Maryland. ***We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1133.***

Contact:

Ryan Fredriksson

Vice President, Government Affairs

410-385-8276

rfredriksson@aqua.org

¹ Shandas, V., Voelkel, J., Williams, J., & Hoffman, J. (2019). Integrating Satellite and Ground Measurements for Predicting Locations of Extreme Urban Heat. *Climate*, 7(1), 5. doi:10.3390/cli7010005