



BALTIMORE TREE TRUST

House Bill 1133 (Delegate Bridges) – Tree Planting – Urban Trees Program and Commission for the Innovation and Advancement of Carbon Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings Written Testimony

Date: February 24, 2021

Position: SUPPORT

Submitted to: House Environment and Transportation Committee

Submitted by: Thomasina Poirot, Co-Chair, Baltimore Tree Trust

10,000 Trees Per Year is the Goal and HB1133 can help get us there. Baltimore’s tree canopy is woefully deficient. Due to disease, lack of maintenance, and lack of planting organizations, Baltimore’s canopy is 13% below the 40% recommended level for healthy cities. Climate change, heat maps, lack of stormwater management, and hotter than normal summers have increased constituent discussions about the importance of trees; approval of HB1133 would provide organizations like BTT (though the Chesapeake Bay Trust) with resources to scale operations resulting in more trees, healthier cities, and more JOBS for Maryland residents!

Workforce Development. Equity. Environmental Justice. Public Health. The Baltimore Tree Trust solves all of these issues, one tree at a time. Founded in 2008, the Baltimore Tree Trust (hereinafter “BTT”), is a 501(c)(3), is dedicated to restoring Baltimore’s urban forest through tree planting and maintenance, which are all accomplished by workforce development initiatives.

Mandatory Maintenance. BTT mandates that its higher caliper trees are planted pursuant to arborist recommendations, and each and every tree is watered for a period of two years after planting. This operations protocol has resulted in a higher tree survival rate and faster results to greener neighborhoods. Baltimore City residents have reported that children are more active in their new tree-lined streets and excitement about trees is growing!

Best of all, BTT’s plantings are being done by **BALTIMORE CITY RESIDENTS** pursuant to partnerships with other local non-profits committed to return to work and work preparation programs. BTT has a workforce development pipeline program called the Urban Roots

Apprenticeship Program which recruits, trains, mentors and connects Baltimore residents with successful careers in the landscaping industry.

BTT is one of the only organizations planting trees in Baltimore City and is leading the way—in 2020, BTT planted more than 3,000 trees. HB 1133 and its economic provisions would help to support BTT's capacity to plant 10,000 trees per year over the next 5 years, equating to more than 60 total jobs created through Urban Roots Apprenticeship and on a path forward to the 40% canopy restoration goals.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Thomasina Poirot', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Thomasina Poirot