



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 1133

Tree Planting – Urban Trees Program and Commission for the Innovation and Advancement of Carbon
Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings
Environment and Transportation Committee

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, GreenGrace, the parishioner-led environmental advisory mission of the Maryland Episcopal Diocese, supports HB1133.

The benefits of trees are well known. They include drawing down carbon from the atmosphere, knocking down airborne particulate matter before being breathed in, and helping combat the heat island effect. Numerous studies report that, when enough trees are present, psychological distress drops. More trees provide greater capture of stormwater thereby easing stress on overburdened, outdated sewer infrastructure. Trees are also a vital component of ecosystems, providing food and shelter to countless organisms.

This bill particularly addresses the abysmal tree canopy in many disinvested and underserved communities in our urban areas statewide. The lack of tree canopy in these communities is shocking when compared to Roland Park, for example. This bill calls for two years of maintenance of newly planted trees that will enable a higher success rate in new tree survival and more “green” jobs. These new green jobs should be offered to qualified residents of the very communities where the new trees are planted.

Finally, we laud the innovative call for carbon market funding of sustainable tree planting. According to the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, in a year, a one-half acre of forest absorbs approximately the same amount of CO₂ produced by the average car's annual mileage. Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to our climate crises.

The volunteers of GreenGrace and the Maryland Episcopal Diocese respectfully request a favorable vote for HB1133.