

Testimony of Elly Cowan
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Before the
House Health and Government Operations Committee
January 28, 2021

Pertaining To: HB92, Procurement - Invasive and Nonnative Plant Species -
Prohibition on Use of State Funds

Support

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of Preservation Maryland, I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the value of history, preservation, and sustainability in Maryland.

Preservation Maryland is the statewide voice for historic preservation that works to protect the best of Maryland. Since 1931, Preservation Maryland has worked tirelessly to protect the places, stories, and communities in Maryland that matter. Through our Smart Growth Maryland program, Preservation Maryland advocates for a more environmentally and economically sustainable future that creates opportunities for all Marylanders through better development patterns.

SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 92

Preservation Maryland supports HB 92, which would prohibit the expenditure of state funds on certain types of non-native or invasive plant species, with certain exceptions including for historically appropriate landscaping at any state-owned property that is listed in or considered eligible for listing in the Maryland Register of Historic Properties. By prohibiting the State from buying or planting non-native and invasive species, HB92 would go a long way in helping to reduce the spread and negative ecological consequences of such plants, while ostensibly promoting the use of native species.

The use of native plants has the environmental benefits of requiring much less watering, fertilizer, and pesticides, and they can prevent water run-off and improve air quality. By eliminating the need for excessive mowing and maintenance, native

plants can play a role in reducing pollution. HB92 is a step in the right direction of encouraging the use of native plants, and all of the benefits that follow, in landscaping across the state by prohibiting the purchase or planting of non-natives or invasive species. Therefore, I respectfully urge a favorable report of HB92.

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