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MAYOR

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HB 1133

February 24, 2021

TO: Members of the House Environment and Transportation

FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations

RE: HOUSE BILL 1133 – Tree Planting – Urban Trees Program and Commission For The Innovation and Advancement of Carbon Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 1133.

House Bill 1133 will support and encourage tree-planting efforts, with a goal of planting and helping to maintain native species in the State's underserved areas. The Bill also establishes and provides funding for an Urban Tree Program administered by the Chesapeake Bay Trust.

Baltimore City, like many other Maryland jurisdictions, has developed its own Climate Action Plan (adopted in 2012) and set a GHG emissions reduction goal of 25 percent reduction by 2020 and 30 percent by 2025 (relative to 2007). While the rise of global emissions are a serious threat to all, adverse effects from a changing atmosphere can compound existing poverty in a city like Baltimore, where almost 35 percent of households earn less than \$25,000 annually. The City has also established a goal to increase its tree canopy coverage to 40 percent tree.

The bill also supports the goals in our 2019 Sustainability Plan in the Trees and Forests chapter: Plant and establish more trees ensuring equitable planting distribution; Assess and manage the city's tree canopy for long-term health; and, Preserve the city's existing tree canopy.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 1133.