



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 24, 2021

**Committee:** House Environment & Transportation

**Bill:** \_\_\_\_\_ HB 991 Natural Resources – Forest Mitigation Banks – Qualified Preservation

**Position:** Support

### **Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 991, which would allow afforestation or reforestation requirements under the Forest Conservation Act to be met by both creation or qualified preservation of forests.

Expanding these requirements to include maintenance, not just creation, is a reasonable and effective approach to enhancing and protecting healthy forests in Maryland. Local governments recognize the value of forests to our communities, from impacts on individual health to climate resiliency. But available land for new forest creation is difficult to find; in the meantime, existing forests are not maintained. Allowing reforestation and afforestation requirements to be met through restoration of existing forests allows local governments the flexibility they need while enabling the protection and cultivation of healthier environments.

For this reason, the Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 991 and respectfully requests a favorable committee report.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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