

SHANEKA HENSON  
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Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 18, 2022

Hon. Chairwoman Maggie McIntosh

Hon. Vice Chair Mark Chang

Appropriations Committee

6 Bladen Street

Annapolis, MD 21401

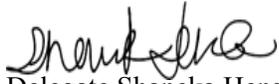
Thank you Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang and the esteemed colleagues of the Appropriations Committee for considering House Bill 540 **Agriculture – University of Maryland Extension – Urban Farmer Assistance**. HB540 will establish an Urban Agricultural Agent dedicated to urban farm production and crop management at the University of Maryland Extension (UME), within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. This legislation will offer training and technical assistance necessary for urban farmers to address head on, the critical hurdles and other impediments experienced when growing in the urban farms. HB540 will further ensure that the University of Maryland’s Extension provides urban farmers assistance with business management, crop productions and training that will not only assist beginning farmers but continue to assist farmers looking to expand their existing operations.

Urban farming benefits our environment and local communities. Small farms work in a regenerative way and balance what they take from the land with what they give back. Small farms throughout Maryland that sell food at farmers’ markets and through community supported agriculture (CSAs) boost community health by providing local sources of fresh, often organic produce.

Nearly one third of global greenhouse gas emissions come from the agriculture sector, and it is the largest source of nonpoint source pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay. Urban farming will

allow for increased green space in otherwise developed areas of Maryland, which lends itself to provide better local water and air quality.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shaneka Henson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Delegate Shaneka Henson