

HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY
3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-0700

Joshua Feldmark, Director
Calvin Ball, County Executive

www.howardcountymd.gov

March 9, 2022

Delegate Kumar Barve, Chair
House Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT**: HB 1372: Environment – Green Infrastructure Rebate Program - Establishment

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Julie Costantino and I run Howard County's residential reimbursement (rebate) program. The program was established in 2014 and has supported the installation of over 340 stormwater practices. Residents who take advantage of the program cite the financial compensation as the determining factor for following through with a project. Historically, the reimbursement rates did not reflect the total costs of project installations and many residents were not able to go through with installations due to the cost.

In 2020, County Executive Calvin Ball supported a Council Resolution which increased reimbursement rates for all stormwater practices to 75% of the cost up to a maximum for each type of practice. Since this resolution was passed there has been a huge increase in the number of residents interested in the program. An interest that exceeds the County's available funding for the program. Establishing a statewide rebate program could support the existing Howard County reimbursement program by allowing more residents to participate by offering a 100% reimbursement.

It could also provide an opportunity to HOA's and non-profits who reach out to us regularly asking if there is available funding or grants that can support stormwater work on their properties. While our Administration's reimbursement program has been successful, it is apparent that there is still an outstanding need for financial support to property owners. Establishing a State rebate program could support existing County programs at a direct benefit to residents.

The ability for other jurisdictions to expand opportunities to incentivize sustainability practices is good policy and good for Maryland's environmental goals across the state. I welcome your partnership and urge a favorable report on House Bill 1372.

Julie Costantino
Sustainability Program Manager
Howard County Office of Community Sustainability