

HB784 Establishment of an Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program in Maryland's
Department of Natural Resources

My name is Heather Martley. I am a Baltimore City resident and am writing in support of this bill.

The State of Maryland is experiencing a crisis of native biodiversity. Due to development, invasive species, and deer overbrowsing, native plant and animal species populations are severely threatened, and sadly, already exterminated in many areas. For example, Mt. Pleasant Park in NE Baltimore City at the 4900 block of Herring Run Dr. (across from my property) is choked by invasives and all native plants have been eaten to the ground by deer. This forest is dead with no chance of recovery. See the attached photograph.

This is the future of much of Maryland's public land if we do not take action now.

Establishment of an Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program will give DNR the mandate, and hopefully resources, to identify and protect sensitive areas. Preserving biodiversity in the face of climate change is critical.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Heather Martley
Baltimore, MD