

## DOUGLAS HOWARD

2914 Duncan Rd. White Hall, MD 21161-8935  
410-692-5682 [suzukizone@yahoo.com](mailto:suzukizone@yahoo.com)

Feb 5, 2022

TO: Honorable Lauren C. Arian  
District 7  
Lowe House Office Building, Rm 324 6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Ways and Means Committee Members and Delegate  
Arian,

I am writing to urge you to support in any way possible HB 376 (Outdoor and Preschool Licensing Pilot). Having witnessed, and supported the work of Backyard Basecamps, (Bliss Meadows) in Baltimore, I can testify that this wonderful young nurse and her staff have worked miracles transforming an abandoned acreage and house from an eyesore into a miracle. From a scar of unused and befouled property that no one wanted, Atiya Wells has built a wonderful learning site with farm animals, a garden supplying fresh produce to the neighborhood and an enriching educational experience for local children and adults. She has garnered support from citizens, businesses and been highlighted in local and national coverage on television.

This bill would allow her organization and others in the state to provide an expansive and solid program to bring nature, agriculture and a broad learning experience to scores of local preschool children. These are the types of experiences that could never be encountered in a brick and mortar classroom, especially in Baltimore.

Now I realize that you are representing a part of the state far from Northern Baltimore but your web page indicates you have children who had the privilege to experience nature and the outdoors, agriculture and parks in ways that the kids in an urban environment couldn't imagine. These kids don't have access to centers like the Steppingstone Farm Museum, The Otter Point Creek Alliance on the bay, Eden Mill Park and so many others. I believe we can programs like HB 376 to germinate, in our state, in order to bring some of that natural wealth to youngsters who would otherwise never experience life outside of concrete, asphalt and weeds.

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE support this bill and cast your enthusiastic vote for HB 376 when it is presented to you.

I have included some links to highlight the Backyard Basecamp program. It would be such a treasure to have more opportunities like this for all the young kids of the state to enjoy and find positive values greet them as they grow.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS HOWARD

<https://backyardbasecamp.org>

<https://www.wbalv.com/article/backyard-basecamp-baltimore/36450324#>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ddd0cp1c4s4>