



February 7, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Alden Stoner and I am CEO of Nature Sacred, a foundation that has supported the creation of more than 30 green spaces, Sacred Places, in Baltimore alone and more across the state of Maryland. One of these spaces is at BLISS Meadows.

I am writing to express my support for outdoor preschools, and specifically, support for such a program at BLISS Meadows.

For over 25 years, we have seen first-hand the enthusiasm for outdoor education programs in Baltimore communities where an option for outdoor preschool is currently out of reach for many. For example, last summer, Atiya Wells, who leads Backyard Basecamp as well as programming at BLISS Meadows, led a summer camp at this incredible urban green space that is addressing eco-injustice head-on. More parents signed their children up for the camp than Atiya and her team were able to accommodate. Reaction from the children and feedback from families was overwhelmingly positive. This was a first for many. These young campers were able to safely explore the wonders of nature just steps from their homes.

If HB376 passes, more children will have the opportunity to spend these early, formative years immersed in the natural world. And I truly believe there's no underestimating the impact of this experience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Alden E. Stoner'.

Alden E. Stoner

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