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Testimony for SB 923 Greenspace Equity Program – Favorable

Honorable Senators:

I am writing to express support for Senate Bill 923: Greenspace Equity.

This bill has the potential to have a significant positive impact on communities throughout Maryland. Research shows that safe, engaging public spaces and access to nature improve the health of communities. In addition to providing a place to exercise, parklands help combat loneliness and isolation, increase access to nature's healing effects, and create stronger communities. The increased use of parks during the COVID 19 pandemic proved their importance to our communities and their value to public health.

Underserved communities were particularly affected by the pandemic for many reasons – a significant contributing factor was a lack of green space. I urge you to vote favorably for this bill so that all residents can enjoy the quality of life that makes Maryland a special place to live.

References:

National Recreation and Parks Association. Fact Sheet on Parks and Mental Health:
<https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/9c491783f73a45f89abb0443b1a3e977/parks-improved-mental-health-quality-life.pdf> National Recreation and Parks Association 2237 Belmont Ridge Road Ashburn, VA 20148-4501

Klinenberg, Eric. 2018. Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life. Crown Books.