



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE
OF MARYLAND

The Maryland Episcopal
Public Policy
Network

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 503
ALSO IN SUPPORT OF SB 923 IN CONFORMANCE
WITH HB 503**

**Environment and Energy – Natural Resources - Greenspace Equity Program -
Establishment
FAVORABLE**

**TO: Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair,
and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee; and
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair, and members
of the Budget and Taxation Committee**

FROM: Rev. Linda K. Boyd, Episcopal Diocese of Maryland

DATE: March 30, 2023

The Episcopal Church at large and the Diocese of Maryland in particular have embraced the concept of reparations, a concept not limited to financial considerations but to a leveling of the playing field across a broad spectrum of issues, including achieving equity in quality-of-life issues, such as quality of life. HB 503 will take important steps to rectify well-entrenched environmental policies that have resulted in unfairly and disproportionately affecting communities of color. Rectifying such inequities is long overdue. Equity with regard to the environment is sorely needed. Living in a healthy environment is essential for all and not just for wealthy people, who almost never have to address these issues. The systemic racism that has been caused by redlining and reinforced in multiple ways to destabilize and harm communities of color is the present painful backdrop of the beautiful healing green space neighbors create and care for. Each one of us is responsible for ensuring the success of programs to address these injustices.

Every person, as a matter of basic human dignity, has a fundamental and inalienable right to a healthful and stable environment. Ensuring a process for overburdened and underserved communities to have the opportunity to enhance their Greenspace is essential to providing for the public health and livability we all deserve.

The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland requests a favorable report with regard to HB 503.