



*Forming Faithful Stewards,
Caring for Sacred Waters*

PO Box 6791
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 20, 2023

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation
Maryland House of Delegates
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Dana Stein
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation
Maryland House of Delegates
251 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, I write to urge your support for the Maryland the Beautiful Act (HB 631) to advance this bill favorably from committee.

We, along with the attached list of 187 people of faith, the Earth and the web of life, and strive to be good stewards of the Earth's land and waters. We are grateful for the ways the Maryland Assembly has worked to protect our environment, but more needs to be done to create a healthier Bay for future generations.

Greenspaces benefit humans' physical, mental, and spiritual health. However, not all Marylanders have easy access to greenspaces. Likewise, many greenspaces are and will continue to be subject to threat of development that could diminish biodiversity. At present, Maryland has permanently conserved just under 30% of its total lands and critical habitats (~24% of land and water) and only annually monitors ~11% of land under easement. This bill sets a conservation goal of 40% of Maryland lands permanently protected by 2040, while also developing a plan for implementation, stewardship, and improved the health of the land.

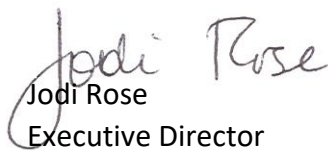
These measures also strengthen Maryland's strategies for fighting climate change, something we are woefully underprepared for and are called upon to act now for future generations' health and well being. Preserving land in perpetuity is a key strategy for fighting climate change, because when land is preserved it sinks carbon and creates resilient ecosystems that are otherwise lost if the land is developed. Bolstered funds in the Citizen Stewardship Grant, also included in the Maryland the Beautiful Act, will increase funding to school programs that help develop the next generation of conservation leaders. The Maryland the Beautiful Act is an investment in our lands and Maryland youth, ensuring that future Marylanders will be able to enjoy the bountiful beauty of Maryland.

Importantly, this bill increases the capacity of small and medium under-resourced land trusts to engage in conservation. The Maryland the Beautiful Act would create a one-time funded \$9.5M Land Trust Rapid Response Revolving Loan Fund Program that will enable land trusts to

compete for land acquisition for conservation purposes in an ever-competitive real estate market. **This Fund would tip the scale in David-and-Goliath situations where these land trusts may otherwise be unable to secure and protect land from development.** Uplifting these land trusts rebalances power in the face of climate change and keeps Maryland focused on a future where all people can thrive.

We are all called to continually renew ourselves and improve our behaviors to be more mindful of future generations. This is important legislation that will enhance and protect Maryland's biodiversity, invest in future generations of Marylanders, empower more Maryland land trusts to conserve land, and remind our state leaders for years to come that nothing is more important than preserving greenspace in perpetuity so that all may thrive here. As the Dalai Lama says, "Since climate change and the global economy now affect us all, we have to develop a sense of the oneness of humanity." As people of faith, we hope that you will take this step to conserve Maryland's land and invest in Maryland's youth, for it is one small step in uniting humanity to preserve the dignity and health of us all.

Sincerely,


Jodi Rose
Executive Director

First Name	Last Name	City	County	State
Danielle	Allen			MD
Ruwaydah	Amin	Baltimore		MD
Payne	Ann	Middletown	Frederick	MD
Clare	Archer	Mount Airy	Frederick	MD
Gwen	Austin	Frederick		MD
Dara	Baker	Columbia	Howard	MD
John	Barnes	Elkridge	Howard	MD
Alison	Bennett	Potomac	Montgomery	MD
Lorraine	Blakeslee	Jefferson	Frederick	MD
Lauren	Bloom	Edgewater	Anne Arundel	MD
Michael	Bloom	Berwyn Heights	Prince George's	MD
Patricia	Bodine	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Sharon	Boies			
Victoria	Bolton	Woodsboro	Frederick	MD
Kolya	Braun-Greiner	Takoma Park	Montgomery	MD
Joy	Brown	Baltimore	Baltimore	MD
Eloise	Brown		Baltimore	MD
Ronnie	Brown	Burtonsville	Montgomery	MD
Rita	Bueche	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Mary Catherine	Bunting	Ruxton	Baltimore	MD
Margaret	Burrows	Ellicott City	Howard	MD
Patricia	Cahaney	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Reba	Carruth	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
Amy	Clements	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
James	Cockey	Salisbury	Wicomico	MD
Linda	Coyle	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Marianne	Dacey	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Jan	Danforth	Baltimore		MD
Kathryn	Dangin	Owings	Calvert	MD
Daniel	Davis		Frederick	MD
Holly Fluty	Dempsey	Bethany Beach	Sussex	DE
Megan	Didavi	Gaithersburg	Montgomery	MD
William	Dinges	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
sylvia	diss	Potomac	Montgomery	MD
Fred Scherlinder	Dobb	Bethesda	Montgomery	MD
Therese	Dougherty	Baltimore		MD
Joyce	Dowling	Brandywine	Prince George's	MD
Marzena	Dyba			
Davin	Faris		Carroll	MD
Liz	Feighner	Laurel	Howard	MD
Susannah	Feldman	Columbia	Howard	MD
Mickey	Fenzel	White Marsh	Baltimore	MD
Rita	Ferry	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
Siddeeqah	Fichman			
mary ann c.	ford	frederick	Frederick	MD
Janet	Fox	Middletown	Frederick	MD

First Name	Last Name	City	County	State
Michele	Frome	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Gerald	Fuss	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Nancy	Gehman			MD
Charlie	Goedeke	Laurel		MD
Debbie	Gousha			
Monica	Greene	Bowie	Prince George's	MD
Bonnie	Greer	Washington		DC
Bethany	Gregg	Baltimore		MD
Louise	Gregg	Baltimore		MD
Kathy	Gross	Catonsville	Baltimore	MD
Ron	Gunderson	Ellicott City	Howard	MD
Wendy	Hall		Howard	MD
Ammar	Hanif	Odenton		MD
Mary	Harrison	Ocean City	Worcester	MD
Josh	Hastings	Forest Hill	Harford	MD
Lisa	Hayes			MD
Carel	Hedlund	Cockeysville	Baltimore	MD
Cathy	Henderson	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Kerri	Hesley	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Heidi	Hess-Webber	Laurel	Prince George's	MD
Rebekah	Hock	Chestertown	Kent	MD
Paul	Holmes		Montgomery	MD
Lani	Hummel			
Linda	Hunt	Elkton	Cecil	MD
Jill	Huppert	Baltimore		MD
Katherine	Huy			
Marc And Alice	Imlay		Charles	MD
Evelyn	Jacob	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
Jesica	Jacobs	Bowie	Prince George's	MD
Josh	Jacobs-Velde		Atoka	OK
Natalie	Johnson	Nottingham	Baltimore	MD
Susan	Johnson	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Kathryn	Kevany	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Janet	King	Gaithersburg	Montgomery	MD
Carolyn	Knight	Olney	Montgomery	MD
Elizabeth	Knupp	Davidsonville	Anne Arundel	MD
Mary	Kolle	Derwood	Montgomery	MD
Nikole	Koterski			
Cairn	Krafft	Owings	Calvert	MD
Dylan	Laconich			
Gail	Landy	Gaithersburg	Montgomery	MD
Rev. Albert K., III	Lane	Lusby	Calvert	MD
Cheryl	Lang	Salisbury	Wicomico	MD
Amie	LaPorte			MD
Faheem	Lea			
Annabel	Leshar	Easton	Talbot	MD

First Name	Last Name	City	County	State
Erica	Lloyd	Washington		DC
Jessica	Lowry			MD
Leah	Mack	Bridge	Frederick	MD
Ellen	MacKenzie			
Frieda	Malcolm	Salisbury	Wicomico	MD
Maureen	Malloy	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Katherine	Martin	Perry Hall	Baltimore	MD
Rita	McMullin	Lutherville	Baltimore	MD
Lee	McNair	Chevy Chase	Montgomery	MD
Susan	Meier	Hunt Valley	Baltimore	MD
Laura	Melamed			
peggy	meyer	Baltimore		MD
cora	middleton	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Elizabeth	Miller	Baltimore	Baltimore	MD
Sandra	Miller	Unit X Greenbelt	Prince George's	MD
Eneshal	Miller	Beltsville		MD
Patty	Mochel	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Oswaldo	Montoya			
Delores	Moore			MD
Margaret	Moos			CT
Patricia	Murphy	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Joelle	Novey	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Ron	Pagano JD	Salisbury	Wicomico	MD
Elizabeth	Parker	Delmar	Wicomico	MD
Mary Ellen	Pease	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Alison	Petersen	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Michael	Peterson	Myersville	Frederick	MD
Christina	Pham Linhoff	Baltimore		MD
Lynn	Pinder	Baltimore		MD
Nancy	Plaxico	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
Kurt	Pluntke	Colmar Manor	Prince George's	MD
Kathleen	Rall	Jefferson	Frederick	MD
Kenzie	Raulin	Kensington	Montgomery	MD
William	Reamy	Towson	Baltimore	MD
Heidi	Rhodes	Silver Spring	Montgomery	MD
Sheila	Robinson	Columbia	Howard	MD
Jodi	Rose	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
Gloria	Rosencranz	Millersville	Anne Arundel	MD
Mary	Rouse	Gaithersburg	Montgomery	MD
Karen	Royer	Severna Park	Anne Arundel	MD
Robert	Royer	Severna Park	Anne Arundel	MD
Judith	Rubinstein	Greenbelt	Prince George's	MD
Mollie	Rudow	Eldorado	Dorchester	MD
Lenny	Rudow	Edgewater	Anne Arundel	MD
Martha	Ruffin	Baltimore		MD
Cecilia	Rund	Reisterstown	Baltimore	MD

First Name	Last Name	City	County	State
Debbie	Satorius	Knoxville	Washington	MD
Barbara	Schectman	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Suzanne	Schmidt	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Janet	Scudiero			
Dominic	Scudiero			
Rasheedah	Sharif			
Cheryl	Sidwell	Avella	Spartanburg	PA
Linda	Silversmith	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
Ruth Anna	Skowronski	Germantown	Montgomery	MD
Sandra	Smith-Gill	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Bonnie	Sorak	Ellicott City	Howard	MD
Catherine	Stirling	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
Ruth	Stumpfoll	Pasadena	Anne Arundel	MD
Kraven	Sweitzer	Pasadena	Anne Arundel	MD
Safiyyaah	Tauheed	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
Cynthia	Taylor	Owings Mills	Baltimore	MD
Cathy	Tengwall	Grasonville	Queen Anne's	MD
Rand	Tenor	Mechanicsburg	Cumberland	PA
Lydia	Thomas			MD
Albert	Todd	Annapolis	Anne Arundel	MD
Theresa	Toole		Kings	NY
Sandy Lee	Triolo	Baltimore		MD
ellen	turner		Montgomery	MD
Sharon	Unger	Columbia	Howard	MD
Gail	Unterberger	Gaithersburg	Montgomery	MD
Susan	Vilcheck	Owings	Calvert	MD
Ann	Vinup	Parkville	Baltimore	MD
Mary	Vogelsang		Anne Arundel	MD
Laurie	wallace-Lanham			
Shelley	Weakly	Frederick	Frederick	MD
Glenn	Wells	Timonium	Baltimore	MD
Johanna	Wermers	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
nanci	wilkinson	Bethesda	Montgomery	MD
Cynthia	Williams			
Marilyn	Wind		Montgomery	MD
Barbara	Winter Watson	Ellicott City	Howard	MD
Susan	Woodman	Baltimore		MD
Mark	Wright	Rockville	Montgomery	MD
Joseph	Wright		Baltimore	MD
Farah	Yahya	Salisbury	Wicomico	MD
Laurie	Yelle	Germantown	Montgomery	MD
Richard	Yobst	Marion Station	Somerset	MD
Adrienne	Yoe	Baltimore		MD
Kathy	Younkin	Columbia	Howard	MD
Amy	Yount	Bethesda	Montgomery	MD
Esther	Ziegler	Frederick	Frederick	MD