



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

House Bill 530

*Maryland Trails Advisory Committee and the Maryland Office of Trails - Establishment
(Great Maryland Trails Act)*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Date: February 29, 2024

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 530. This bill establishes a regime whereby Maryland policymakers can better account for and promote the state's diverse trail networks.

Trails are fast becoming a critical pillar of community design and economic development. Thanks to initiatives like Program Open Space, and a state and local focus on conservation, Maryland is blessed with an extensive network of interlocking trails. These networks, which crisscross Maryland's diverse geography, are increasingly proving to be a magnet for both tourism and attracting new residents. By aligning state resources to better account for existing trail networks and promote some of Maryland's recreational gems, HB 530 will prove to supercharge many of this state's existing assets.

As the developers and owners of large swaths of Maryland's trail ecosystem, counties are excited by the opportunities that may be unlocked by HB 530. As such, counties urge the Committee to give HB 530 a **FAVORABLE** report.