



Maryland Arborist Association, Inc.

Danielle Bauer Farace
Executive Director

HB 0561 – Tree Expert Licenses - Workers' Compensation Insurance Requirements and Application and Renewal Fee Alterations

Committee: Environment and Transportation
MAA Position: **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT**

Date: February 14, 2024

The Maryland Arborist Association, Inc. (MAA) works to promote the importance of proper tree care, education in the field of arboriculture, and support the accomplishments of arborists. The majority of our membership are Licensed Tree Experts (LTE) who would be directly impacted by HB 0561.

The LTE program provides protection to Maryland consumers that those engaged in tree care in the state are using best practices and are properly insured. We have continually heard from our membership concerns about individuals who are operating wrongfully without a license or abusing their license are not properly being enforced. It has been expressed to us that through this legislation, these issues will be addressed through the increase of application and renewal fees.

However, we are apprehensive to support the increase in fees without knowing how much the increase will be or guaranteeing that the additional revenue will benefit enforcement of the program. Our membership has expressed that significant fee increases would negatively impact Maryland's small tree care businesses. Due to this concern, we request that HB 0561 be amended to include the amount of fee increases. With this change, we request your favorable report on HB 0561.

Sincerely,

Danielle Bauer Farace
Executive Director