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Subject: Unfavorable HB1270

Dear Economic Matters Committee Members,

The Wildlands of western Maryland are just that, wild lands. However, the wildlands of western Maryland are also an entire ecological system consisting of above and below ground elements comprising the whole. Wild lands forest soils are comprised of many forms of life, micro-organisms, interacting with mycorrhizal fungi, interacting with root systems of plants of an entire ecosystem unique to that area and unspoiled by human intervention. These areas are not replaceable, repairable or duplicative. The wild land ecosystems are large enough to be considered an ecosystem and, as wildlands, support and provide the essential requirements for all forms of life.

Mountain Maryland, in particular Garrett County, is the most heavily forested county in the state. That being said, the amount of wild lands in Garrett County are sufficiently small thus rendering them all the more vital and valuable.

As populations continue to grow and technology continues to change, demand on these resources will only grow. Where will the line be drawn? I say, here! Wildlands are non-negotiable assets upon which we are completely dependent.