



**HB257 - Favorable with Amendments**  
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## **HB257 - Favorable with Amendments**

Environment and Transportation Committee  
January 29, 2025

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

I am writing to express the support of my company Forested, LLC for bill HB257, with a few caveats. I founded Forested in Bowie, MD in 2011, where we pursue our mission of **growing Food Forests so people and forests thrive together**. Forested is a regional leader in food forest research, design, implementation, stewardship, and education. Working with government entities and partners, the Forested team has created eight new public Food Forests, in addition to designing over 20 Food Forests for private clients. Past and present municipal clients include the cities of Hyattsville, MD, College Park, MD, and DDOT Urban Forestry.

During the time that I've been working to create Food Forests, I've seen Food Forests and Foraging grow in popularity. Many people connect deeply with these spaces, because of their active engagement in stewardship and harvest. The forest ecosystem is ultimately what sustains life in the eastern United States and in Maryland, and Food Forests are an exciting way for residents to better understand and explore our relationship with the forest! In the medium- to long-term, Food Forests should grow in every part of Maryland, providing food, nature connection, education, health and enjoyment for residents.

- We urge the Maryland government to **legalize foraging on all Maryland public lands**, while requiring foragers to adhere to best foraging practices.
- We recommend **creating food forests on public lands throughout Maryland** where people can learn, forage, and connect with Maryland forests in a new way.
- If a foraging permit system is created, we request that it be as **simple, minimal, and streamlined as possible**. Applying for permits often becomes onerous for citizens.

We urge a favorable report on HB 257.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lincoln Smith", written in a cursive style.

Lincoln Smith, Owner  
Forested, LLC