

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

TO: Senator Brian Feldman, Chair of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee, and Committee Members

FROM: Humna Sharif, Climate Adaptation Manager, The Nature Conservancy; Cait Kerr, State Policy Manager, The Nature Conservancy,

POSITION: Support SB164 Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program - Alterations

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supports SB164 offered by the Department of Natural Resources and sponsored by Chair Feldman. TNC is a global conservation organization working to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. In Maryland, our work focuses on delivering data-driven, on-the-ground solutions that secure clean water, air, and healthy, secure living environments for our human and natural communities today and in the generations to come.

The Tree-mendous Maryland Program is vital for helping Marylanders restore tree cover in the state. More than 3000 towns communities and parks in the state have benefitted from the program. Tree-mendous Maryland's goal is to help Maryland residents have access to affordable trees to plant on their public lands. With permission from landowners, volunteers can plant trees at schools, in state and community parks, local open space, street trees and more.¹

While the program currently supports tree plantings, SB164 will improve its implementation by providing DNR the ability to use program resources for maintenance of native trees and shrubs on public lands.

TNC commends Chair Feldman and DNR on introducing this bill. SB164 will promote forest health and resilience in the state long term. **Therefore, we urge a favorable report on SB164.**

¹ <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/treemendous/default.aspx>