

Testimony on Senate Bill – Favorable

SB0266 – Local Government - Regulatory Powers - Regulation of Tree of Heaven

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

February 6, 2026

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB0266, as the tree-of-heaven and the spotted lanternflies that eat its sap are detrimental to the health of our environment.

I first learned of the tree-of-heaven from a Christmas tree farmer in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in 2020, and began to notice them in my neighborhood shortly thereafter. The lanternflies are a huge problem linked to proliferation of the tree of heaven. I personally engaged the Lake Roland Nature Council on poisoning the tree-of-heaven in the roads surrounding the park. Thankfully it appears no tree-of-heaven are located deep within the park. They are up and down I-83, Falls Road, and other major roadways near my home, and getting rid of them is a critical environmental measure.

Thank you for your consideration of SB0266 and for your continued commitment to preserving what we can of the environment in our state. I respectfully urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Armendariz, MSW, LCSW-C
MD-11A