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January 27, 2026

**SUPPORT: Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program - Alterations**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Maryland LCV supports SB 164 Natural Resources - Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland Program - Alterations. We thank the Department of Natural Resources for this legislation to improve natural resource management in Maryland.

Maryland LCV has long supported efforts to preserve, expand, and support the health and resilience of our forests and tree canopies statewide.

SB 164 will allow the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to expand the allowable uses of funds within the Pamela J. Kelly Tree-Mendous Maryland program to include maintenance as well as education. Property and land managers often express a need for financial assistance with maintenance of trees, not just support for their planting. Adding this flexibility to the program with this legislation will enable DNR to better respond to on-the-ground needs across the state. This program amendment will better support land managers in maintaining healthy forest and trees on public lands and open spaces, which, in turn, offers tremendous benefits for health, air quality, and climate resilience.

By updating the Tree-Mendous program in this way, DNR is demonstrating responsiveness and effective stewardship of public resources. SB 164 will ensure this successful and widely supported program delivers greater, lasting benefits for Maryland's forest and trees.

Maryland LCV respectfully requests a favorable report on this bill.

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