



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961...

The Voice Of The People of Howard County

Date: 27 February 2019

Subject: **Bills Supporting Forrest Conservation**

Dear Members of the Howard Delegation,

Trees are a natural bulwark against the dangers of climate change. However, the 1991 Maryland Forest Conservation Act (FCA) currently requires that for every four acres of forest removed, only one acre of trees must be planted as mitigation or reforestation. Since 1991 the net loss of forest land in Maryland has hit a staggering level of 100,000 acres!

We, the Board of Directors of the Howard County Citizen Association (HCCA), hope we can count on you to **fully support** a suite of three Bills to tighten up the intent of the FCA, now before the 2019 Maryland General Assembly. They are:

- “No Net Loss of Forest” (**House Bill 120/Senate Bill 203**);
- “State and Local Forest Conservation Funds” (**H.B. 272/S.B. 234**);
- “Forest Conservation Task Force” (**H.B. 735/S.B. 729**).

The Bills are described succinctly at <https://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bs-ed-op-0222-forest-conservation-20190221-story.html>

Like many Howard residents we have been extremely disappointed to see the continuing loss of forested land to development—even when the property is identified as a Targeted Ecological Area. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources reports that **Howard County ranks number one in deforestation**—above all other Maryland jurisdictions. This is not a ranking anyone should be proud.

We hope you will take action to improve this situation,

Sincerely,

Stu Kohn
HCCA, President