



March 3, 2022

House Bill 749

**Natural Resources – Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot
Program – Establishment**

Anne Arundel County Delegation

Position: FAVORABLE

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 749, which will establish a Maryland Park Explorers Pilot Program in the Department of Natural Resources to serve youth in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, and Cavert counties. This program will encourage outdoor recreation by connecting children to parks and programming.

Anne Arundel County shares the legislature's commitment to supporting and enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities. With nearly 50 active capital projects in its six year plan, the County Department of Recreation and Parks continues to create public spaces that enhance our health and connect us to nature. We are creating better park access for people with disabilities, transforming the idea of a county-wide trail network from a concept to reality, and investing in water access projects. The pilot program created in House Bill 749 will help us towards our goal of providing a diverse range of accessible recreational facilities and programs to serve the needs of all County residents.

This pilot program will help to support our communities that have minimal access to green space, and provide outdoor and recreational opportunities for youth who have had to forgo programming during the pandemic. The grant funding available through this program will enable the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks to implement free and accessible programming that bridges socioeconomic and resource gaps for underserved youth, promotes the positive impacts of spending time outdoors, provides conservation-related messaging, and incorporates local history and diverse cultural contributions.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 749.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stuart Pittman", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Stuart Pittman
County Executive



STEUART PITTMAN, COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JESSICA LEYS, DIRECTOR
1 HARRY S. TRUMAN PARKWAY
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401
410-222-7867



February 23, 2022

The Honorable Michelle Guyton
Lowe House Office Building, Room 306
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support for HB 749 – Natural Resources – Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program- Establishment

Dear Delegate Guyton and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support of House Bill 749, which establishes a Maryland Explorers Pilot program within the Department of Natural Resources to serve youth within Anne Arundel, Baltimore and Calvert counties.

This initiative aligns with our mission to “create opportunities, enjoy life, explore nature and restore health and wellness”. If Anne Arundel County receives this appropriation it would allow us to expand our natural resources and environmental programming, both within our department as well as with our ongoing relationship with the Anne Arundel County Board of Education.

Thank you for considering my support of this bill. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at 410-222-7867.

Sincerely,

Jessica Leys
Director