

HB749_FAV_Leys

Uploaded by: Jessica Leys

Position: FAV



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

BaltimoreCounty_FAV_HB0749.pdf

Uploaded by: Joel Beller

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JOEL N. BELLER
Acting Director of Government Affairs

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG
Associate Director of Government Affairs

MIA R. GOGEL
Associate Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **House Bill 749**

TITLE: **Natural Resources - Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program - Establishment**

SPONSOR: **Delegate Guyton**

COMMITTEE: **Environment and Transportation**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: **February 23, 2022**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 749 – Natural Resources - Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program – Establishment. This legislation would create a local Park Explorers Pilot Program to connect children to parks and programs that encourage outdoor recreation.

The COVID-19 Pandemic has kept children, parents, and residents across the world in their homes for nearly two years. Many children have had to forgo their favorite recreational programs to allow community members to keep their distance and stop the spread of a deadly virus. Other children have now become of age to join recreational programming, but may be unaware of what is available to them due to varying availability. Additionally, many face geographic and structural barriers to green space, and have never been able to access all the parks, playgrounds and opportunities for outdoor exercise that Baltimore County has to offer.

The Maryland Park Explorers Program would connect outdoor recreational resources to the communities that need them. This pilot program would supply grant funding to certain local jurisdictions to implement free, accessible, conveniently located programming in communities without easy access to parks. Curricula will encourage outdoor recreation and educate youth on the benefits of conservation and environmental stewardship. Since taking office, the Olszewski Administration has utilized Program Open Space money to aggressively expand the County’s stock of publicly accessible parks, HB 749 would further the County’s objectives by providing access to these vital public resources.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 749. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov.

HB 749 - Favorable - Guyton.pdf

Uploaded by: Michele Guyton

Position: FAV

MICHELE GUYTON
Legislative District 42B
Baltimore County

Ways and Means Committee
Early Childhood Subcommittee
Education Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 306
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3793 • 301-858-3793
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 23, 2022

**HB749 –Natural Resources – Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program – Establishment -
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

I am writing to request your consideration of HB 749 which established a Maryland Park Explorers Pilot Program in Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, and Calvert County.

PRIOR to COVID the American child spends an estimated 4 to 7 minutes a day outdoors and over 7 hours a day inside interacting with electronics and sitting in front of a screen. HB 749 will encourage children to engage in outdoor play and exploration, helping to fight childhood obesity by building physically healthier children while expanding their knowledge of the environment and promoting social and behavioral health.

While the benefits of environmental education are well-documented for both the health of the child and the health of the environment, much of our exposure is inequitable. This bill requires that these programs prioritize children in areas that lack green space and equitable access to outdoor environmental experiences and collect demographic data about their participants.

Maryland has already shown interest in promoting environmental education through similar programs in effect under the Department of Natural Resources such as the *Maryland Partnership for Children In Nature*, but Bill 749 would extend our reach to county parks and to underserved communities with little access to green space.

I thank you for your attention to this matter and request a favorable report on HB749 to establish of County Park Explorer Pilot Programs to teach youth participants the importance of the environment and encourage children to spend greater time exploring and learning in our natural surroundings.

Thank you,

Delegate Michele Guyton

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Delegate Michele Guyton".

Testimony In Support of HB 749 - Environment and T

Uploaded by: Rich Ceruolo

Position: FAV



February 18, 2022

Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD. 21401

In Support of HB 749: Natural Resources – Maryland Park Explorers Grant Program - Establishment

Members of the Maryland House of Delegates, Environment and Transportation Committee.

Our 1400 plus membership of families supports this bill, and the establishment of such a great, health and nature -focused program.

What a great idea to bring nature, equity and inclusion to student populations that may have limited or no access to green spaces. Growing up as a child in the city, I know what it can mean to the mental wellness of a young person to get out into the state woods, and enjoy its parks.

To quote famous naturalist and national parks advocate John Muir: *and “Wilderness is a necessity, there must be places for human beings to satisfy their souls”, “Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine into trees” and “Of all the paths you take in life, make sure some of them are dirt”*. Such great advice!

After the events of the past 2 years, now more than ever, we all need to be outside enjoying more nature. Getting back to nature nourishes the soul. Preserving these spaces and giving a whole new generation of Marylanders the appreciation for green spaces. While also improving equity of access to all of our state’s natural wonders as essential for the overall health and well-being of Marylanders.

Please return a favorable report on HB 749 in order to provide programming while improving access to green spaces all across the state of Maryland.

Mr. Richard Ceruolo | richceruolo@gmail.com
Parent, Lead Advocate and Director of Public Policy
Parent Advocacy Consortium (Find us on Facebook/Meta)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ParentAdvocacyConsortium>

HB 749 MD Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program (Guyt

Uploaded by: Barbara Wilkins

Position: INFO



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

LARRY HOGAN
Governor

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
Lieutenant Governor

DAVID R. BRINKLEY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

HOUSE BILL 749 Natural Resources – Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program – Establishment (Guyton)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: February 23, 2022

COMMITTEE: House Environment & Transportation

SUMMARY OF BILL: HB 749 establishes the Maryland Park Explorers Grant Pilot Program in the Department of Natural Resources for the purpose of providing Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Calvert County with funds to establish local Park Explorers Pilot Programs; requiring the Pilot Programs to target youth populations with minimal access to green spaces, promote the positive aspects of being outdoors, provide conservation-related messaging, and incorporate local history and culture in its messaging; and mandates an annual appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 in FY 2024 - FY 2026.

EXPLANATION: The Department of Budget and Management's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the \$150,000 mandated appropriation provision, which impacts the FY 2024 through FY 2027 budgets.

DBM has the responsibility of submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually, which will require spending allocations for FY 2024 to be within the official revenues estimates approved by the Board of Revenue Estimates in December 2022.

Changes to the Maryland Constitution in 2020 provide the General Assembly with additional budgetary authority, beginning in the 2023 Session, to realign total spending by increasing and adding items to appropriations in the budget submitted by the Governor. The legislature's new budgetary power diminishes, if not negates, the need for mandated appropriation bills.

Fully funding the implementation of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan) will require fiscal discipline in the years ahead, if the State is to maintain the current projected structural budget surpluses. Mandated spending increases need to be reevaluated within the context of this education funding priority and the Governor's tax relief proposals.

Economic conditions remain precarious as a result of COVID-19. High rates of inflation and workforce shortages may be short lived or persist, thereby impacting the Maryland economy. While current budget forecasts project structural surpluses, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant budgetary vulnerability. The Department continues to urge the General Assembly to focus on maintaining the structural budget surplus.

**For additional information, contact Barbara Wilkins at (410) 260-6371
or barbara.wilkins1@maryland.gov**

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<http://dbm.maryland.gov>