MARYLAND LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

GREENSPACE EQUITY

Sponsors: Delegate Dana Stein

Greenspace in urban areas can:

- improve human health
- increase social cohesion
- enhance ecosystems
- reduce urban heat islands

As of 2010, 87% Maryland residents live in areas designated as "urban"

Open, accessible spaces for passive recreation, nature connections, and community gathering are essential to the viability of our urban neighborhoods and yet, many Maryland communities were developed without any available areas for greenspace. Add to that, acquisition and conservation of lands in areas with greater population density is often much more expensive, due to competing values for land.

A “Greenspace Equity Program” would provide annual state funding to land trusts, local governments and other community partners working in Maryland’s underserved and overburdened communities where the public need for greenspace is often greatest. This program seeks to support the creation of new greenspaces in urban settings while also supporting the care and maintenance of them.

- “Community greenspace” includes a variety of uses including: community gardens, community gathering open space areas, community woodlands, green networks, parks, trails, and urban farms.
- Eligible grant recipients include land trusts, other nongovernmental organizations, counties and municipalities.
- Funds would come from the state share of Program Open Space. $5 million would be appropriated in year 1, $7 million in year 2, and $10 million in year 3 and subsequent years.