



Date: September 25, 2024

Bill: 24-0507 Study and Report - Infrastructure and Urban Meadows

Position: Support

Dear Chair Conway and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **Council Bill 24-0507 – Study and Report – Infrastructure and Urban Meadows**. The legislation would require a report on the costs and benefits of installing and maintaining 100 acres of urban meadows in Baltimore City.

Urban meadows of native grasses and flowering plants improve the quantity and quality of green spaces in cities, housing native species and providing essential habitat to support local biodiversity. Urban meadows are planted with cost-effective self-sustaining plants that support improved stormwater management by absorbing more water than hard-packed vacant lots.

In addition to their ecological and economic benefits, urban meadows also provide social benefits and opportunities to build community. Green spaces improve neighborhood aesthetics, and increased access to and engagement with nature supports improved physical and mental health and wellbeing. Establishing and maintaining additional urban meadows can support increased green space equity by offering more Baltimore City residents with the multiple benefits that green spaces provide and could help address environmental justice concerns throughout the City.

We believe a study and report on urban meadows can and should align with relevant existing initiatives such as Baltimore's Sustainability and Green Network Plans. It is timely and appropriate that the City of Baltimore assess and report on the ecological and social benefits that urban meadows provide City residents. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on Bill 24-0507.**

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