Name of Congregation

RE: Forest Conservation Act Amendments 2019

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_: OR Dear Delegate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

We are writing to express our support for the Forest Conservation Act amendments. As faith leaders who respect the sanctity of the Earth and the whole web of life, we strongly reject societal trends toward unfettered development at the expense of the next generation who count on us to be good stewards of the Earth today.

**Thou shall not steal trees from the next generation.**

Children once played easily in trees in their back yard, at a park down the street, or at Grandma’s house. But, today, forests are hard to find – when was the last time you spotted a child climbing a tree?

Over the past eight years, over 14,000 acres of forest have been lost due to development. Forests play a crucial role in stabilizing soil, improve water quality, offer important mammal habitats, and reduce ambient air temperatures with cooling shade.

The Forest Conservation Act **amendments** will help protect priority forests for future generations. The loss of tree canopy is felt by the general public and future generations, while developers profit from transforming land away from its natural state. Over the past three years, thousands of people of faith have planted over 13,000 trees at their churches, synagogues, and temples. However, **for every 1 acre of forest planted by the faith community, Maryland lost 40 acres**. Society cannot keep up with this pace of forest decimation. We need your help.

Please support Forest Conservation Act amendments to strengthen it so that we can truly protect forests and reverse this alarming trend.

Will you help us fight for sustained forest cover by supporting this bill? Please vote in support of the Forest Conservation Act amendments.

Sincerely,