



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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Senator Clarence K. Lam, Senate Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
420 Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Courtney Watson, House Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
216 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT:** Ho. Co. Legislative Bond Initiative: Blandair Mansion

Dear Chair Lam, Chair Watson and Delegation Members,

I am proud to express my support for this project, which would establish funding to support improvements to the Blandair Mansion at Blandair Regional Park.

Howard County is one of the best places to play and enjoy the outdoors in Maryland, thanks in large part to our award-winning parks and playgrounds. Blandair Regional Park is one of eight regional parks in Howard County. When complete, Blandair will span 300 acres in East Columbia. Constructed in 1857, the Blandair Mansion will become the historical centerpiece of the park.

I am grateful for the Delegation's support for our county's park and playground infrastructure, including securing more than \$15 million in State funding for Blandair Regional Park's first three phases. Support for this \$500,000 bond initiative will build upon this investment by funding an HVAC system to prevent mold and rot; a sprinkler system to mitigate fire risk; and public restrooms so that the building can be used as a public space in the future. Blandair Mansion's rehabilitation and renovation will attract future visitors to the venue for meetings, weddings, special events, classes, and to learn about the Blandair Regional Park's connection to Howard County history.

Howard County's children and adults have enjoyed getting back outside as part of the COVID-19 recovery. Our community's public parks are among the best free and accessible places for residents and visitors to care for their mental and physical health. I urge support for this project so that the current and future park users can stay active, healthy, and build new friendships in a place that many have come to love.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive