



NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

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Date: 12/7/2021

To: Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

From: Raina McManus, Chair, Wellesley Natural Resources Commission

Re: Testimony on an act establishing a Municipal Reforestation Bill, House 905 and Senate 504

December 7, 2021

My name is Raina McManus, and I serve as chair of the Wellesley Natural Resources Commission, a five-member elected board with broad responsibility for our town's conservation land, wetlands, parks, and environment. We also hold the statutory authority of Tree Warden for our town. I'm here to speak in support of house bill 905 and senate 504, An act establishing a Municipal Reforestation Bill.

The Town of Wellesley has long recognized the important role trees and forested land play in defining our community's character. Each year we carry out a free tree planting program for our residents' front yards to maintain our tree canopy, and in 2008 passed a tree protection bylaw which was strengthened at last year's Town Meeting.

Wellesley is embarking on a Climate Action Plan in which the protection of existing trees, and the ambitious planting of new trees, will play a starring role. It's no secret that trees clean our air and water, provide valuable wildlife habitat, contribute to our physical and mental health, create a healthy environment, and cool our citizens AND our warming planet.

Passage of the Municipal Reforestation Bill will enable **ALL** communities in Massachusetts to reap the many benefits trees and forests provide by providing support on several levels, including planning and funding. It will also help our State meet our greenhouse gas reduction goals, and make us more resilient to climate change.

On behalf of the Wellesley Natural Resources Commission, I urge favorable action on the Reforestation Bill. Thank you Senator Rausch, and the entire Committee, for your work, and for the opportunity to testify today.

Sincerely,

Raina McManus