

# SUPPORT HB528

Topic: Conservation Landscaping in Property Owner Associations (e.g. HOAs)  
Bill Patron: Delegate Krizek

## Overview:

HB528 provides property owners in homeowner associations (HOAs) the authority to choose to install managed conservation landscaping on their private property, unless regulated via their HOA's declarations. This legislation allows for an HOA to enforce reasonable restrictions concerning management, design, and aesthetic guidelines for managed conservation landscaping features.

## Reasons to support:

- **Buying a home outside of an HOA is harder than ever:** With more than 8,810 HOAs in Virginia, nearly one in four Virginians live in homes controlled by HOAs. It is increasingly difficult to buy a new home outside of an HOA: According to the U.S. Census, 82% of newly built homes sold in 2021 were a part of an HOA. That figure has *more than doubled* since 1990 when it was just 40%.
- **Turf (or lawn) is not ecologically sustainable:** Turf-only landscapes provide little to no food or habitat for wildlife. They demand large amounts of energy, fertilizer, and water to thrive. In Virginia, homeowners manage approximately 700,000 acres of turf. That is more than the combined acres of corn and soybeans across all of Virginia.
- **Conservation landscaping is sustainable and right for our times:**
  - Conservation landscaping incorporates native vegetation including no-mow ground covers, reducing the needs for fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides.
  - Conservation landscaping purifies our air, sequesters carbon, reduces water use, and reduces polluted runoff that comes from turf and degrades our local rivers and streams, as well as the Chesapeake Bay.
  - Managed conservation landscapes are designed to be attractive to the human eye while also providing habitat for birds, bees, and other pollinators.
- **Property rights are important:** As the current climate crisis increases the intensity and durations of rainstorms, homeowners should have the flexibility to manage their private property in sustainable ways that help mitigate the impacts of climate change.



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This position was taken by Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)'s Legislative Committee and Board of Directors and is supported by Virginia's conservation community. For a complete list of VCN positions, visit [www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker](http://www.vcnva.org/bill-tracker). VCN is committed to building a powerful, diverse, and highly-coordinated conservation movement focused on protecting our Commonwealth's natural resources today and for tomorrow.