

Maryland Farm Bureau Hotline #3

Bills We're Following

HB56/SB177: Procurement - State Department of Education - Control Authority - Local Food Purchasing

Delegate Charkoudian / Senator Hester | House Hearing: Health & Government Operations 2/4/25 at 2:00 p.m.

This bill will alter the list of units that are exempt from authority of the Board of Public Works for procurement by the State Department of Education. The purpose is to create master contracts to allow for easier procurement of locally sourced food.

MDFB Position: Support

MDFB is in support of this bill as it will allow for easier procurement of fresh, local food for the school systems in Maryland. Instead of engaging with individual school systems, a producer would be able to enter into a master contract with the Department of Education. This allows for another outlet for producers and more fresh, local food for students.

HB104/SB226: Maryland Farms and Families Fund – Purpose and Use – Alterations

Chair of E&T / Chair of Finance | House Hearing: E&T 2/5/25 at 2:00 p.m.

This bill would allow for the use of the Maryland Farms and Families Fund to match purchases made with FMNP, SNAP, and WIC benefits at farmers markets and farm stands.

MDFB Position: Support

This is another MDA Departmental bill. The ability to expand the ability for the consumers to purchase from a Farmer's Market with FMNP, SNAP, and WIC benefits brings opportunities to both those selling and purchasing at the farmers markets.

HB114/SB249: Pesticide and Pest Control - Revisions to Pesticide Applicator's Law and Repeal of Obsolete Provisions

Chair of E&T / Chair of EEE | House Hearing: E&T 2/5/25 at 2:00 p.m.

This bill will modify and revise those allowed to apply pesticide under the Pesticide Applicator's Law. The language for applicators responsibility is also updated.

MDFB Position: Monitor

MDFB will continue to monitor the path and hearings of this bill and the changes that it will make to the Pesticide Applicator's Law.

HB140/SB176: Agriculture - Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan - Uses of Information

Chair of E&T / Chair of EEE| House Hearing: E&T 2/5/25 at 2:00 p.m.

This bill authorizes the Department of Agriculture to use information from soil conservation and water quality plans for certain enforcement actions and statistical purposes.

MDFB Position: Monitor

This bill is an MDA Departmental that gives MDA the same access to information from the Soil Conservation Districts and Water Quality Plan that MDE has access to currently.

HB225/SB203: Vehicle Laws - Exceptional Hauling Permits for Farm Products

Chair of E&T / Chair of JP; Senators Charles, James, Muse, Smith, & West| House Hearing: E&T 2/6/25 at 1:00 p.m.

This bill will create an exceptional hauling permit for field loaded agriculture commodities such as grain, poultry, and milk. These permits would put Maryland weights in line with the surrounding states to allow for easier hauling on the Delmarva and throughout the state.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill will ease the stress on those hauling field loaded agricultural commodities around the state. The added exceptional hauling permit will also put Maryland on the same regulations as our surrounding states, to ease the regulations on those that have to haul across state lines.

HB262/SB240: Department of Agriculture - Maryland Agricultural Commission and Young Farmers

Chair of E&T / Chair of EEE | House Hearing: E&T 2/5/25 at 2:00 p.m.

Altering the membership of the Maryland Agricultural Commission; establishing the Committee on Young Farmers for purposes of communicating to the Maryland Agricultural Commission issues relating to young and beginning farmers in the State; and repealing the provisions of law establishing and governing the Young Farmers Advisory Board.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill will alter the makeup of the industries represented on the Maryland Agricultural Commission. The makeup of the Commission will be more representative of the current agriculture makeup within our state. This bill also will add the Committee on Young Farmers under the Maryland Agricultural Commission.

HB461/SB460: Sales and Use Tax - Cut Flowers - Exemption

Delegate Schmidt, Bagnall, Lehman, & Pruski / Senator Gile | House Hearing: Ways & Means 2/6/25 at 1:00 p.m. / Senate Hearing: Budget & Taxation 2/5/2025 at 1:00 p.m.

Providing an exemption from the sales and use tax for the sale of cut flowers.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill will provide a sales and use tax exemption to cut flowers. Cut flowers are a new and emerging value-added agriculture product.

HB483: Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations

Delegate Ziegler, Allen, Crosby, Guyton, Hill, Hinebaugh, Kerr, T. Morgan, Ruth, Schindler | House Hearing: Ways & Means 2/6/25 at 1:00 p.m.

Repealing the limitation on the maximum amount of a credit against the State income tax that an individual may claim for certain expenses incurred for a donation of deer meat to certain organizations; and applying the Act to all taxable years beginning after December 31, 2024.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill builds off Delegate Ziegler's bill that passed last session to increase the tax credit that an individual could earn for harvesting an "antlerless deer" and donating the venison. This bill

would remove the cap of \$300 in total of tax credits that could be earned from this program, and makes it an unlimited ceiling.

SB272: Prince George's County - Natural Resources - Sunday Deer Hunting and Archery Hunting Safety Zones

Senator Jackson | Senate Hearing: EEE 2/4/25 at 1:00 p.m.

Authorizing the Department of Natural Resources to allow a person to hunt deer on each Sunday of the deer bow hunting season in Prince George's County; and adding Prince George's County to the list of counties in which the safety zone for archery hunters extends a distance of 50 yards from a dwelling house, residence, church, or any other building or camp occupied by human beings.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill would allow for Sunday hunting in PG County during the archery season. The bill also adds PG County to the list of counties utilizing a safety zone of 50 yards for archery, compared to the 100-yard safety zone in other areas of the state.

SB335/HB892: Natural Resources - Canada Geese - Bag Limits

Senator Bailey / Delegate Jacobs | Senate Hearing: EEE 2/4/25 at 1:00 p.m.

Requiring, during the migratory Canada goose (Atlantic population) hunting season, the bag limit for all Canada geese in the State, including geese found in the Atlantic Flyway Resident Population Hunt Zone and the Atlantic Population Hunt Zone, to conform to the bag limit for Atlantic population Canada geese adopted annually by the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

MDFB Position: Support

This bill would require DNR to follow the US Fish & Wildlife recommended bag limit for the Atlantic Fly-Zone. Geese have become a major contributor to crop damage around the state and guarantying that Maryland's bag limit matches the federal recommendation would allow for hunters to potentially harvest more geese.