



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

March 10, 2020

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of HB 805 - Montgomery County - Public Safety - Buildings Used for Agritourism**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 805, legislation that adds Montgomery County to the list of counties that exempt existing ag structures used for agritourism from being required to retrofit the structure with bathrooms, sprinklers and other high occupancy requirements. This exemption allows up to 50 people in the structure. The structure must still adhere to the structural integrity standards as well as entrance & exit requirements. The counties already exempt are: Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Howard, Kent, Prince George's, St. Mary's, Somerset, and Talbot County.

Allowing farms to use existing barns during the non-growing season not only allows them to cut the cost of offering agritourism activities, but also prevents them from having to build more structures just to offer some farm diversification and supplemental income to the working farm.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 805 AND REQUEST A FAVORABLE REPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396