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Date: February 13, 2023
To: Members of the House Committee on Environment and Transportation
From: Holly Porter, Executive Director
Re: HB 0389 – State Ombudsman for Value-Added Agriculture - **SUPPORT**

Delmarva Chicken Association (DCA) the 1,600-member trade association representing the meat-chicken growers, processing companies, and allied business members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Delaware supports HB 0389 and urges a favorable committee report.

The chicken community supports value-added agriculture and small processing plants and recognizes the benefit this addition to the Department of Agriculture would have for the agriculture community at large. As the largest component of Maryland agriculture, we in the chicken community believe that value added commodities serve a vital role in directly connecting the consumer with the producer. Anytime the public can engage directly with the agricultural community, we believe all members are better off, no matter their production method.

We know this position in the Department of Agriculture will help bring out the full potential and fulfill the countless promises that value-added agriculture has for Maryland's economy.

We urge a **favorable** vote on HB 0389.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at porter@dcachicken.com or 302-222-4069 or Grayson Middleton at middleton@dcahicken.com or 410-490-3329.

Sincerely,

Holly Porter
Executive Director