



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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March 3, 2023

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support with Amendments of HB 950 - Maryland Native Plants Program**

On behalf of our Farm Bureau member families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in support with amendments of HB 950. This bill establishes the Maryland Native Plants Program to encourage and promote the use and sale of plants native to Maryland at retail garden centers and wholesale nurseries and to educate the public on native plants. It requires the University of Maryland Extension to administer the Program in coordination with the Department of Agriculture and requires the University of Maryland Extension to hire an extension agent to serve as a native plant specialist.

This bill looks to prioritize the sale and use of native plants in Maryland. However, one issue with the bill is that it excludes cultivars and hybrids as native plants. This makes it a challenge as plant breeders use crossbreeding to improve the viability of the plant to survive in our unstable climate today.

MDFB will be requests an amendment to remove this exclusion.

Amendment #1: On page 2, strike lines 13 & 14

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 950 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT AS AMENDED

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

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