

February 14, 2025

To: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

From: Marshal Cahall – Chesterville Bridge Farm, LLC

RE: Opposition of SB0345 Pesticides - PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions

As a third-generation farmer in Maryland operating a diverse agricultural business cultivating over 2,300 acres of land, utilizing both convention and organic production systems, I submit written testimony in opposition of SB0345 Pesticides - PFAS Chemicals – Prohibitions. This legislation would place an undue burden on Maryland Farmers and Maryland's Agricultural Industry as a whole.

Environmental safety is an utmost priority for Maryland farmers like myself, but eliminating approximately 41% of active herbicide ingredients, 60% of active insecticide ingredients, and 80% of active fungicide ingredients without commercially available, viable alternatives, will threaten the productivity and financial stability of Maryland farmers. On average, it takes approximately twelve years for a pesticide to complete the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration process and the absence of these pesticides in the market during the transition will cause undue harm to farmers. Under this legislation, less pesticides will be available, and farmers will be forced to rely on the limited products that are still registered for use in the state and will be forced to forgo best management practices that include utilizing multiple modes of action against weeds and pests afflicting crops. Essentially, this legislation is taking tools out of the toolbox for crop production in Maryland and could lead to accelerated and increased resistance to our crop protection products.

Additionally, I believe it is important to urge the committee to maintain pesticide regulations that are consistent with EPA standards. Per the EPA website, dated October 3, 2024, there is insufficient understanding of how to measure and detect PFAS in our air, water, soil, and fish and wildlife, how much people are exposed to PFAS, and how harmful PFAS are to people and the environment. Maryland should not seek to supersede federal regulation without just cause and place undue burdens on Farmers.

While I support the effort to ensure environmental safety and sustainability in Maryland, SB0345 is far too restrictive for Maryland farmers like me and fails to account for the unintended consequences of taking crop production tools away from our industry. I respectfully oppose SB0345 and urge an unfavorable report by the Committee.

Sincerely,



Marshal Cahall

Chesterville Bridge Farm, LLC