

I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose HB 1554/ SB 1045 regarding taxing business services. We are engaged in production agriculture which at this moment has more uncertainty, than in the fifty years I have farmed.

First, our markets are very volatile because of our tariff concerns, which likely will have a very negative effect on our business sustainably. Even before this delicate situation our inputs have increased 43% in the last three years, while our grain prices have fallen by 30%. Even though 2.5% seems like a small amount, it is another expense that comes out of the sale of our products, that we must underwrite in our business plan and cannot pass it along down the business chain.

We are also facing budget cutbacks that would eliminate our cover crop program, thus adding another large expense for our operations.

Agriculture has always been a net positive industry in Maryland and this may be the straw that broke the camel's back, in many agricultural enterprises.

I strongly urge you to oppose this oppressive tax.

Frederick County Farm Bureau President, David Burrier