



Maryland Farm Bureau

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March 4, 2026

To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

RE: Support of SB851 - Anne Arundel County – Property Tax Credit – Rural Legacy Program

On behalf of the more than 7,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I respectfully submit this written testimony in support of SB851 – Anne Arundel County – Property Tax Credit – Rural Legacy Program. This legislation would authorize Anne Arundel County to grant a property tax credit for property located within a designated Rural Legacy Area that has been permanently preserved.

Maryland is a national leader in land preservation. The State reached its goal of protecting 30% of its land area by 2030 six years early, achieving that milestone in early 2024. Maryland is now working toward preserving 40% of land by 2040. The Rural Legacy Program has been instrumental in this success, playing a major role in the State’s ability to meet its 30x30 goal ahead of schedule. Through the Rural Legacy Program and other key partnerships, Maryland has conserved more than 1.9 million acres of land, protecting it from large-scale development while safeguarding its natural beauty, agricultural viability, and cultural heritage.

The Rural Legacy Program provides targeted funding to preserve large, contiguous tracts of land that support natural resource protection, agriculture, forestry, and environmental stewardship. By fostering public–private partnerships, the program empowers local governments and land trusts, those who best understand the landscape, to identify and protect the lands most critical to Maryland’s economy, environment, and overall quality of life.

Allowing a property tax credit for preserved Rural Legacy lands would strengthen these efforts and help propel Maryland toward its 40x40 goal. This incentive would encourage additional landowners to participate in preservation programs and help safeguard our finite supply of agricultural land. Preserving farmland not only protects the land itself but also ensures that farming families can continue their operations for generations to come.

For these reasons, the Maryland Farm Bureau respectfully requests a favorable report on SB851.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations

Please contact Tyler Hough, though@marylandfb.org, with any questions