



Maryland Grain Producers Association

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Senate Bill 371 - Water Pollution Control - Discharge Permits - Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

MGPA Position: **Support**

Committee: EEE

Date: February 10, 2026

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 371, which would repeal the requirement that a person have coverage under a concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) general discharge permit before beginning construction on any part of a new CAFO.

Maryland's poultry industry is a critical economic engine for both the state and the agricultural supply chain, including the grain sector. The economic vitality of grain producers is closely tied to the strength and stability of poultry production, which represents the largest markets for feed grains in the state. Feed grain demand from poultry growers provides a consistent and significant market for Maryland grains and soybeans.

When barriers to poultry farm development make it more difficult to expand or modernize production, those downstream markets, including grain producers, face reduced demand and economic uncertainty.

SB 371 would modernize Maryland's regulatory framework by removing a pre-construction permit requirement that can delay or hinder investment in new poultry farms. This bill would not allow farms to receive birds without CAFO permit coverage; just begin construction during periods in which the Maryland Department of Environment allows the permit to lapse and is operating under an administrative extension.

MGPA believes SB 371 strikes an appropriate balance between protecting water quality and encouraging agricultural economic activity that benefits the entire supply chain. By ensuring that poultry producers can build essential facilities without unnecessary procedural barriers, Maryland strengthens its position as a leader in integrated agriculture while supporting the viability of grain farms that supply feed and sustain the broader food system.

For these reasons, the Maryland Grain Producers Association urges a **favorable report** on SB 371.

For more information, please contact:

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