

SENATE BILL 311

M4

4lr0649

By: **Senator West**

Introduced and read first time: January 11, 2024

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment and Budget and Taxation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Agriculture – Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant**
3 **Program – Expansion**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism
5 Grant Program by making certain qualified nonprofit organizations eligible for grant
6 funding; establishing the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Operating
7 Fund; and generally relating to the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency
8 Mechanism Grant Program.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Agriculture
11 Section 10–2101 and 10–2102
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

14 BY adding to
15 Article – Agriculture
16 Section 10–2104
17 Annotated Code of Maryland
18 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Agriculture**

22 10–2101.

23 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

24 (b) “Fund” means the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Fund.

2 (c) "MD FARM" means the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency
3 Mechanism Grant Program.

4 (D) "OPERATING FUND" MEANS THE MARYLAND FOOD AND
5 AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCY OPERATING FUND.

6 (E) "QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION" MEANS A NONPROFIT
7 ORGANIZATION THAT OPERATES A FARM OR COMMUNITY GARDEN IN THE STATE
8 THAT:

9 (1) OPERATES ON AT LEAST 250 ACRES;

10 (2) GROWS BETWEEN 2,000,000 AND 3,000,000 POUNDS OF PRODUCE
11 ANNUALLY;

12 (3) SUPPLIES AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS EXCLUSIVELY TO THE
13 STATE'S FOOD BANKS AND CHARITABLE EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS AT NO COST;
14 AND

15 (4) IS CONSERVED IN A LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM.

16 10-2102.

17 (a) There is a Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant
18 Program.

19 (b) The purpose of MD FARM is to build food system resiliency by leveraging
20 Maryland agricultural products and services to support the State's food banks [and],
21 charitable emergency food providers, AND QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS to
22 alleviate food insecurity.

23 10-2104.

24 (A) (1) THERE IS A MARYLAND FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCY
25 OPERATING FUND IN THE DEPARTMENT.

26 (2) THE PURPOSE OF THE OPERATING FUND IS TO PROVIDE GRANTS
27 TO QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FOR OPERATIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED
28 WITH SUPPLYING AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS TO THE STATE'S FOOD BANKS
29 AND CHARITABLE EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS.

30 (B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE OPERATING FUND.

1 **(C) (1) THE OPERATING FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS**
2 **NOT SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.**

3 **(2) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE OPERATING FUND**
4 **SEPARATELY, AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE OPERATING**
5 **FUND.**

6 **(D) THE OPERATING FUND CONSISTS OF:**

7 **(1) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE**
8 **OPERATING FUND; AND**

9 **(2) ANY OTHER MONEY FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE ACCEPTED FOR**
10 **THE BENEFIT OF THE OPERATING FUND.**

11 **(E) THE OPERATING FUND SHALL BE USED TO PROVIDE GRANTS TO**
12 **QUALIFIED NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS FOR OPERATIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED**
13 **WITH SUPPLYING AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS TO THE STATE'S FOOD BANKS**
14 **AND CHARITABLE EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS.**

15 **(F) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE**
16 **GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF**
17 **\$1,000,000 TO THE OPERATING FUND.**

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
19 1, 2024.