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By: **Delegates Rudolph, Bartlett, Bozman, Conway, Eckardt, Elliott, Elmore, Glassman, Haddaway, Jameson, Kullen, Mayer, McComas, McKee, Shank, Shewell, Smigiel, Sossi, Stocksdale, Stull, Walkup, and Wood Wood, Hammen, Goldwater, Benson, Boteler, Bromwell, Costa, Donoghue, Frank, Hubbard, Kach, Kohl, Mandel, McDonough, Morhaim, Murray, Nathan-Pulliam, Oaks, Pendergrass, Rudolph, V. Turner, and Weldon**

Introduced and read first time: January 23, 2006

Assigned to: Health and Government Operations

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 15, 2006

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Department of Health and Mental Hygiene - Agricultural Ombudsman**  
 3 **Program**

4 FOR the purpose of ~~establishing a certain agricultural ombudsman program in the~~  
 5 ~~Department of Health and Mental Hygiene~~; requiring the Secretary of Health  
 6 and Mental Hygiene to designate an agricultural ombudsman; establishing  
 7 certain duties of the agricultural ombudsman; ~~requiring the Secretary to adopt~~  
 8 ~~certain regulations relating to the agricultural ombudsman program~~; and  
 9 generally relating to an agricultural ombudsman ~~program~~.

10 BY adding to  
 11 Article - Health - General  
 12 Section 2-104(o)  
 13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
 14 (2005 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

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

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**Article - Health - General**

2 2-104.

3 (O) ~~(1) THE SECRETARY SHALL ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL~~  
4 ~~OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM IN THE DEPARTMENT.~~

5 ~~(2)~~ (1) THE SECRETARY SHALL DESIGNATE AN AGRICULTURAL  
6 OMBUDSMAN.

7 ~~(3)~~ (2) THE AGRICULTURAL OMBUDSMAN SHALL:

8 (I) SERVE AS THE PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR INDIVIDUALS  
9 INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURE WHO INTERACT WITH THE DEPARTMENT ~~AND SHALL;~~  
10 AND

11 ~~(4)~~ (II) PROVIDE INFORMATION REGARDING DEPARTMENTAL  
12 REGULATIONS RELATING TO ON-FARM FOOD PROCESSING, ON-FARM FOOD  
13 PREPARATION, AND OTHER ON-FARM ACTIVITIES;

14 ~~(5)~~ (II) ~~ASSIST WITH EFFORTS TO COMPLY WITH DEPARTMENTAL~~  
15 ~~REGULATIONS RELATING TO ON FARM FOOD PROCESSING, ON FARM FOOD~~  
16 ~~PREPARATION, AND OTHER ON FARM ACTIVITIES;~~

17 ~~(6)~~ (III) ~~ASSIST WITH OBTAINING HEALTH PERMITS FROM THE~~  
18 ~~DEPARTMENT; AND~~

19 ~~(7)~~ (IV) ~~WORK WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO COORDINATE AND~~  
20 ~~STREAMLINE HEALTH PERMITS FOR FARMING AND ON FARM ACTIVITIES.~~

21 (4) ~~THE SECRETARY SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS RELATING TO THE~~  
22 ~~OPERATION AND STAFFING OF THE AGRICULTURAL OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM.~~

23 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
24 October 1, 2006.