

Testimony for Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 19, 2020

In **SUPPORT** of S.B. 478: Food Procurement – GHG Emissions (Sen. Lam)

Kim Wagner, Owner of Black Bottom Farm Collective LLC, Kent County, Md

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Black Bottom Farm Collective LLC, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 478 to set a target of reducing Maryland's GHG emissions from food purchases by 25% by 2030.

When I was diagnosed with cancer at age 39 and was frustrated by the lack of ethically grown, local, and nutrient-dense food, I left my career as a nurse and began farming. I raised pigs, chickens, turkeys, and veal calves on 50 acres of open range, ponds, and woodlots. We transitioned into a vegetable farm and collective dedicated to building a stronger more cohesive local food system. We now manage a market garden, a commercial kitchen, an online farmers market and delivery, and a mobile market bus that brings people food that's nutritionally focused, Earth friendly, and humane.

Our philosophy is that we need to eat less meat but better meat, and this legislation aligns with that philosophy. The contributions of factory farmed animal products to global warming are undeniable. And if we don't address these emissions, our entire agricultural system's ability to provide healthy food will be compromised. We must reduce conventionally raised meat, but that does not mean eliminating it. Instead, we should eat smaller amounts of meat like the meat we source – pasture-raised meat from farms in the Chesapeake bay Watershed. Consuming meat raised on pasture utilizing regenerative practices will both reduce our carbon footprint while rebuilding our soil.

The State of Maryland – through its food purchasing – is contributing to the harms that factory farmed animal production is causing, and we have a responsibility as a state to purchase fewer of these products and more fresh, local, and healthy produce plus a smaller amount of ethically and sustainably raised meat. Our state can be proactive reducing our carbon footprint by limiting conventionally sourced meat and support our local agriculture by purchasing more locally sourced, sustainable, ethically sourced products from farms committed to regenerative practices.

Thank you for your consideration of our position, and please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about the work we do or our views on this legislation. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Kim Wagner