



DELMARVA POULTRY INDUSTRY, INC.

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Date: February 25, 2020

To: Members of the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Holly Porter, Executive Director

Re: SB 985 – Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program & Certified Local Farm Enterprise Food Aggregation Grant Fund - Establishment - **Support**

Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI), the 1,700-member trade association representing the meat-chicken growers, processing companies and allied business members on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Delaware supports SB 985 and urges a favorable committee report.

SB 985 would establish the Office for the Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program within the Department of Agriculture, establish a Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program, encourage a goal of 20% procurement from certified local farm enterprises and establish a grant to encourage food aggregation.

This program will have many benefits to local, Maryland farmers, including Maryland chicken growers. Delmarva chicken is one of the most local products to our area – the birds are locally raised on Maryland farms, fed by local grain grown in Maryland fields, locally harvested by Maryland chicken processors and then shipped to local retailers. And the Maryland farmers raising the chicken and grain are all subject to the strictest nutrient management requirements.

By encouraging the purchase from local producers, the state is helping with decreasing the carbon footprint of our food supply. Locally produced means less traveled miles, less tractor trailer miles and local production methods such as healthy soils initiatives that is better than any other greenhouse gas initiatives that limit what people eat.

We believe that this bill will help all farmers, small and large, and will continue to maintain the heritage of agriculture in the state of Maryland.

We urge a favorable vote on SB 985.

Should you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at porter@dpichicken.com or 302-222-4069 or Nick Manis, Manis Canning & Associates, 410-263-7882.