

FARM HERITAGE CONSERVANCY

Preservation, Cultivation, Education

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a 501(c)3 non-profit

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
and Members Education, Health,
and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 432 – Charles County – Public Safety – Buildings Used for Agritourism
Letter of Support - EHEA – Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 1:00 pm

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and Members:

On behalf of the board of the Farm Heritage Conservancy, I am asking for your support of Senate Bill SB 432. This proposal was included in the Charles County Commissioners 2020 Legislative Package and would allow Charles County to join 10 other Maryland counties and opt-in to legislation allowing certain agritourism buildings exemptions from selected building codes.

SB 432 will benefit Charles County with increased revenue and tax base by enhancing the marketability of our area as a tourist destination and increase farm viability and visibility. It will facilitate additional educational and entertainment opportunities and assists landowners in making a living from their land.

The exemption poses no public safety risk, as the buildings will need to follow building codes such as adhering to structural integrity standards and entrance and exit requirements. For this reason, our county's EMS and Fire Department expressed verbal and written support. It was unanimously approved by our County Commissioners and supported by our Planning & Growth Management and Economic Development Division.

Thank you for the opportunity to present our support for SB 432.

Sincerely,



A. Theresa Robinson
Board Member, Farm Heritage Conservancy

cc: The Hon. Arthur Ellis