



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 19, 2020

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Opposition of HB517 - Constitutional Amendment - Environmental Rights**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony opposing HB 517. This bill proposes an amendment to the Maryland Constitution, contingent on a referendum, to establish that every person has the right to a certain clean and healthy environment. The bill elaborates that a clean environment is all of the following: clean air, pure water, ecosystems that sustain Maryland's natural resources, which include that waters of the state, air, flora, fauna, climate, and public lands, the preservation of the natural, healthful, scenic, and historic values of the environment, and states that Maryland's natural resources are the common property of every person. This would give citizens in Maryland standing to intervene on any state application process if they believe it interferes with any of those clean environment definitions mentioned above. Some examples would include, CAFO's, irrigation, hemp, new buildings, composting, commercial fishing and aquaculture permits.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We support responsible and workable actions designed to permit and protect the privilege and rights of farmers, commercial fisherman, and aquaculturalists, to produce without undue or unreasonable restrictions, regulations or harassment from government or the private sector. We support actions to ensure that farmers are protected from undue liability and nuisance suits when carrying out normal production practices.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU RESPECTFULLY OPPOSES HB 517

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson'.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396