



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

February 28, 2020

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of SB 707 - Task Force on the Tourism Industry in Maryland**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 707 with amendments. This bill establishes the task force on the tourism industry in Maryland to study challenges and opportunities within Maryland's tourism industry. The task force will review current funding, seek input from all sectors that contribute to tourism, including rural areas and agritourism, and make recommendations to the governor by January 1, 2020 regarding additional funding, training, and other resources needed to increase diversity and inclusion in the tourism industry.

Agritourism is a great way for farmers to gain more interest in their products while educating the public on farming and where their food comes from. Retaining ownership in their products and offering those local grown products to the public allows a Maryland farmer to be more profitable. Through agritourism events, farmers open their farms up to the public and in turn offer their value-added products for sale. Maintaining a strong agritourism industry in Maryland is critical to not only added farm profitability, but also consumer access to where their food is actually produced.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: Agritourism should be defined as activities conducted on a farm and offered to the public or to invited groups for the purpose of education, recreation, or active involvement in the farm operation.

Amendments: On page 2, line 4 - STRIKE: ~~and~~; then on line 5 add: **(8) ONE REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE MARYLAND FARM BUREAU, DESIGNATED BY THE FARM BUREAU; AND** Lastly, on line 5, strike the original ~~(8)~~ and replace with **(9)**

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 707 WITH AMENDMENTS

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Director of Government Relations

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