

**Support for House Bill 1488 (Delegate Charkoudian) –  
Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program and Certified Local Farm  
Enterprise Food Aggregation Grant Fund - Establishment**

Position: Support with Sponsor Amendments

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Attn: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

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Chairwoman Pendergrass and Members of the Health and Government Operations  
Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 1488 with sponsor amendments, sponsored by  
Delegate Charkoudian, which establishes the Certified Local Farm Enterprise Program  
and Certified Local Farm Enterprise Food Aggregation Fund.

Let's make the tough job of growing food for Maryland a little easier by encouraging our  
institutions to buy from our farms, and by giving our farmers more access to the tools  
they need to get to market. This bill will help build relationships between farms and  
institutions in an effort to better support our local farming community. The bill also  
supports the creation of mobile refrigerated trailers and value-added food processing  
facilities in order to make it easier for smaller, local farms to get their produce onto the  
shelves of institutions in Maryland. We should put our state's procurement money to  
good use helping farmers!

Local food procurement by state institutions will allow its clients, staff, and other  
consumers have improved access to healthier institutional meals that utilize fresh,  
nutrient-rich, local produce. Procuring food grown by the Maryland farming  
community would also reduce the amount of energy it takes to transport food from  
other parts of the world, and generate more money within Maryland's local  
economy. We can bolster economic success of our farm businesses while also  
reducing carbon emissions and improving health -- that's a winning package.

These programs will not only provide more revenue for Maryland farmers, but they

will also ensure the strength of local farm economies, provide local farmers with the tools needed to serve larger markets, preserve farmland, improve access to healthy, nutritious food, and build the resilience of our local economy.

Ultimately, this bill will lift up local farmers and help increase the amount of locally grown food that folks are able to access at state institutions – which is why I am standing strongly behind this bill for the 2020 session. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to adopt a favorable report of HB 1488 with sponsor amendments.

Sincerely,  
Spencer Ellsworth