



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

February 27, 2020

To: House Ways & Means Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Opposition of HB1146 - Forest Conservation - Mel Noland Woodland Incentives Fund - Distribution of Agricultural Land Transfer Tax Revenue**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony opposing HB 1146. This bill increases the dedicated amount of agricultural land transfer tax revenue to be used on woodland transfers from \$200,000 to \$500,000 a year. The bill also reduces the amount of woodland on the property from 100% wooded to 80%. Even though, this is more of a forest preservation easement process, it is being funded by the Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Fund. Which is dedicated to preserving prime and productive farmland in the state.

Instead of taking from an already underfunded source of money that is dedicated to preserve farmland, why not use Rural Legacy or Parkland acquisition funds as those funds primarily focus on preserving forested and buffered land.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We support the Maryland Ag Land Preservation Foundation and county preservation boards in their efforts to preserve agricultural land throughout the state. We oppose taking productive agricultural land out of production for the purpose of meeting requirements for forest conservation, buffers, and mitigation measures. The state should conduct a survey to determine the loss of acreage of food producing land for these purposes.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU RESPECTFULLY OPPOSES HB 1146

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