



Senate Bill 0769

Income Tax Credit – Venison Donation – Extension

Position: Support

Dear Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

I am writing on behalf of Senate Bill 0739, sponsored by Senator Bailey and Senator Hester, which extends and increases the value of the tax credit with the Venison Donation Program.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started in March 2020, its economic impact has caused more and more Marylanders to seek food assistance, many for the first time. At the Maryland Food Bank, we've seen our year-over-year, statewide food distribution efforts increase by 89%.

During this time, many of our traditional food donation streams ground to a halt. They struggled to keep their shelves stocked for the general public, leaving little to donate to the food bank. As a result, the food bank has had to purchase the majority of the food it has distributed. For example, MFB has seen a 356% increase in the amount of money spent on purchased food (\$23.8M vs \$5.2M) from March 1 to January 31.

One donation source we are grateful to rely on is venison from state agencies. We have received donations of venison for several years through state agencies, and it is a good protein source for our Network Partners to distribute to those in need.

This tax incentive program with our hunters will help increase the value of the tax credit. For many years, the hunters have been a lifeline in providing this protein that many would otherwise not be able to access.

The continuation of the tax credit will not only help our hunters but will also increase donations to the Maryland Food Bank – which is very much needed and appreciated as the pandemic continues to place a higher demand on food banks.

We stand behind this bill and urge the Committee to adopt a favorable report of Senate Bill 0769.

Sincerely,

Nancy Smith
Sr. Director of Government Relations