



January 14, 2021

The Honorable Dereck Davis, Chairman
House Economic Matters Committee

Re: House Bill 8 - Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Use of Proceeds for Maryland Healthy Soils Program

Position: *Support*

Chairman Davis & Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts to express our *support* for House Bill 8, Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Use of Proceeds for Maryland Healthy Soils Program. This bill would add the Maryland Healthy Soils Program to the Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund (SEIF) and would dedicate \$500,000 of the fund to be used towards climate change and resiliency programs.

Enacted by the legislature during the 2017 legislative session, the Maryland Healthy Soils Program was designed to improve health, yield, and profitability of soils and increase biological activity and carbon sequestration in the soils of the State by promoting practices based on emerging soil science. Through the promotion of no-till or low-till farming practices and rotational grazing, the Maryland Healthy Soils Program has been able to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its local tributaries and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As a supporter of the Maryland Healthy Soils Program, I respectfully request a *favorable* report of House Bill 8, which shows your dedicated support to the agricultural community and a healthier Chesapeake Bay. Thank you for your kind consideration and attention to this legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts