Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

March 31, 2021

To: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Opposition of HB317 - Maryland Green Purchasing Committee - Food and Beverage Procurement - Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony opposing HB 317. This bill requires the Maryland Green Purchasing Committee in consultation with the Departments of the Environment, Agriculture, General Services, and other stakeholders, to develop, by January 1, 2022, a methodology for State agencies to estimate greenhouse gas emissions of food and beverages procured. They will need to establish a baseline measurement by January 1, 2023 and develop strategies and policy recommendations while establishing a goal to reduce food generated greenhouse gas emissions in State units by 25% by fiscal year 2031.

As was said during last year's bill hearing, there is no direction in this bill on how food products will be measured and what impacts this will have on Maryland farmers, especially livestock and poultry producers. Without guidelines in the bill to ensure Maryland farmers are not excluded from the procurement process due to national or international baseline GHG emissions, this bill could/would put Maryland farmers out of business. This would be in direct conflict with the bill passed last year to include Certified Local Farmers to the state's food procurement program (HB1488/SB985).

In July 2019, a summer study committee released a draft list of carbon intensive foods and they were: beef, lamb & goat meat, butter, shellfish, cheese, pork, chicken, cream, fish, eggs, rice and milk. During the summer study, there was no interest in the group drafting the list on where the foods were grown, only on the food's life cycle emissions.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU RESPECTFULLY OPPOSES HB 317

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396