

February 17, 2021

## HB0831: Food System Resiliency Council

Dear Chair Barve and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to ask for your support of HB0831: Maryland Food System Resiliency Council.

We believe that formalizing a state-wide body that supports the regional food system will best help Maryland residents emerge from this current emergency, and to be prepared when other food emergencies arise. HB0831 would formalize and expand upon the synergy and strength that has been built within the regional food security network in recent months. Collaboration amongst partners throughout the State, including government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and businesses, is critical to the success of short-term food access programs, as well as long-term strategic planning for a more resilient, sustainable, and equitable local food system for Maryland and the region.

Importantly, a Food System Resiliency Council could also help the State address the challenges that communities of color have historically faced in accessing food and economic opportunities, and seeking environmental justice, which are direct results of deep structural and systemic racism. As a coalition, we can make progress towards ending hunger and food insecurity, and establishing a more just, sustainable food system for the long term. **For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB0831.**

*The Montgomery County Food Council*

*4P Foods*

*Family Learning Solutions, Inc.*

*Mid-Atlantic Food Resilience and Access Coalition*

*No Kid Hungry, Maryland*

*The Western Maryland Food Council*

*Takoma Park Silver Spring Food Cooperative*

*Prince George's Food Equity Council*

*Sisterhood of Salam Shalom Silver Spring*

*Critical Issues Forum*

*Current and Former Members of the Montgomery County Food Security Community Advisory Board, including Omayra Kazi, Rhona Reiss, Charmaine Howard, Vanessa Pierre*

*Takoma Alliance for Local Living Economy (TALLE), Takoma Park Mobilization*

*The Charles Koerner Conservancy for Urban Farming*



