



February 12, 2021

BILL: HB0831: Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: Letter of Support of House Bill 0831/Senate Bill 0723

BILL ANALYSIS: Establishing the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council; providing for the composition, co-chairs, co-vice chairs, and staffing of the Council; providing that a member of the Council may not receive compensation but may be reimbursed for certain expenses; authorizing the Council to establish certain subcommittees; specifying the duties of the Council; requiring the Council to submit certain reports to the General Assembly on or before certain dates; making this Act an emergency measure; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council.

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

The Western Maryland Food Council urges you to SUPPORT this bill to establish the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council within the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, as a formalized body to guide statewide food system activities in response to the challenges created by COVID-19, and with the intent to ensure a self-sufficient, sustainable local food economy for the long term, that can support nutritious, equitable food access and food security for all Marylanders.

Small food councils like ours have struggled to bring partners together to work on issues such as food access for needy families, supporting local farmers as they work to produce and distribute healthy food, working with healthcare providers to ensure educating people about healthy/mindful eating, and ensuring the sustainability of all parts of our local food system. The creation of the Maryland Food Resiliency Council will provide critical staffing support and framework for the administration and operation of collaboration between government and key food system community partners.

HB0831 will effectively foster a resilient, equitable, and sustainable food system in Maryland to respond to the emergency at hand, as well as for the long term. For these reasons, the Western Maryland Food Council supports HB0831 and urges you to vote FOR this bill.

Should you require additional information, please feel free to contact me at wlantz@umd.edu or 301-334-6966.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Willie Lantz, Jr." in a cursive script.

Willie Lantz, Jr.
Chair

CC: Senator George Edwards, Senator Paul Corderman, Delegate Wendell Beitzel, Delegate Jason Buckel, Delegate Michael McKay, Delegate Neil Parrott, Delegate William Wivell, Delegate Brenda Thiam