



February 3, 2021

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chairman
House Environment & Transportation Committee

Re: House Bill 472 – Agriculture – Use of Glyphosate – Prohibition

Position: *Oppose*

Chairman Barve & Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD), we express our *opposition* for House Bill 472 – Agriculture – Use of Glyphosate – Prohibition (HB 472). As written, HB 472 puts the agricultural economic system at risk. Farmers across the state have been using glyphosate-based herbicides for more than 40 years. While alternatives exist, the safety, efficacy, and relative affordability of glyphosate have made it a key component in conservation farming.

As of October 1, 2022 – HB472 bans an individual in Maryland from using Glyphosate products. Glyphosate is an instrumental and effective tool Maryland farmers use to control invasive and noxious weeds. It is especially valuable in no-till farming and other practices that improve soil health. No-till farming decreases the amount of soil erosion caused in certain soils, especially in sandy and dry soils on sloping terrain. In addition to the more than 800 studies that have demonstrated the safety of glyphosate to human health, research conducted at the USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center showed that use of glyphosate did not impact the soil microbial community. Essentially without the use of this product Maryland farmers would need to use more intensive tillage and/or change to different active ingredients, many which have not been independently verified to be as effective or as safe for the environment.

Glyphosate protects agricultural ground from invasive plant species which are detrimental to the economy and the environment. Our Association remains an avid supporter of the health and economic system for our agricultural stakeholders in Maryland, and the scientific evidence presented through numerous federal and health studies encourages an *unfavorable* report for HB 472.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts