



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

CHARLES R. CONNER III, ESQ.
Director of Government Affairs

JOEL N. BELLER
Deputy Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **SB 723**

TITLE: Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

SPONSOR: Senator Hestor

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

POSITION: **FAVORABLE**

DATE: March 4, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 723 – Maryland Food System Resiliency Council. This legislation would establish the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council to address the severe food insecurity throughout the state.

This pandemic has forced local government to come to terms with the rise of food insecurity in the State of Maryland. As most schools remain closed, vulnerable students have not been able to access an important source of food, forcing struggling families to pick up the cost. In response, Baltimore County aided in the swift transition to meal-pick up programs on both school days and weekends to help improve accessibility. In addition, the demand for non-profit food delivery has skyrocketed despite severe resource shortages. In response, the County has also helped secure thousands of dollars of funding to food distributors. Despite local efforts, this need will extend far beyond the pandemic and all counties need a coordinated more long term solution.

This legislation would establish a council tasked to address the food crisis that has been exacerbated by the pandemic. The council will work toward this goal by accessing data on food insecurity, leveraging state and federal grants, exploring the need for Community Eligibility Provisions and reporting recommendations to the state on how to move forward. This will help support local governments in their fight to end local hunger.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 723. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov.