

An Affiliate of
the Maryland Association
of Counties, Inc.



Reply to:

DATE: March 9, 2021

TO: Members, Health and Government Operations

FROM: Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors
Maryland Association of County Health Officers

RE: HB 1077 - Health - Licensing of Food Establishments - Exemption for
Open-Air Food Markets

The Maryland Conference of Local Environmental Health Directors (the Conference) and the Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) **OPPOSES** HB 1077. The Conference and MACHO are affiliates of the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) and represent county environmental health directors and county Health Officers who lead the state's 24 local public health departments.

The Conference and MACHO are deeply concerned that the adoption of this bill would allow unregulated facilities to serve potentially hazardous food which increases the incidence of foodborne illness through diminished food safety. This, in turn, places the health of Maryland's citizenry and visitors at risk. This bill would allow business owners to provide potentially hazardous food to all Marylanders including, vulnerable populations, young children, people on immunosuppressant medications, and the elderly.

Food safety regulations are in place to provide the minimum standards necessary for businesses to operate in a safe manner. If these regulatory protections are removed, the business is at increased liability if an injury or illness occurs from the consumption of the food products. The bill also uses terms, such as "open air market" which are not defined elsewhere.

Accordingly, the Conference and MACHO requests the Committee give HB 1077 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views on this matter. If you have further questions concerning this written testimony, please contact:

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