



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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January 21, 2021

To: House Ways & Means Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support with Amendment of HB 7 - Income Tax Credit – Venison Donation Expenses – Montgomery County Deer Donation Program**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support with amendment of HB 7, legislation that expands the current income tax credit program to include hunters in Montgomery County as eligible recipients of the tax credit as well as to include the Montgomery County Deer Donation Program as an eligible organization to receive the venison donation.

Opening more opportunities for hunters to harvest over-populations of deer in the state will assist with curbing the ever-increasing crop loss due to deer damage. Per the 2011 Maryland Ag Statistics survey, deer accounted for \$7.7 million in crop losses in Maryland annually. This damage impact has significantly increased over the last 10 years to nearly \$50 million annually.

After reviewing the bill as drafted, the amendments to the General Tax article look to create an unintended consequence when trying to include Montgomery County into the law. By striking “hunting and harvesting of” on page 2, line 8, this would exclude hunting and harvesting antlerless deer in the other 22 counties from qualifying for the tax credit. Because of the strike and the new language, only individuals that hunt and harvest in Montgomery County would qualify. After talking to the bill sponsor, this is not the intent of the bill. The bill is to only close a Montgomery County loophole and make sure deer harvested in Montgomery County and are donated to the Montgomery County Deer Donation Program qualify for the tax credit.

**Amendment Language to clean up and clarify this intent is attached as a separate document.**

**MDFB Policy:** We support a state tax credit for each deer donated to a food bank or other food donation non-profit under a crop damage permit.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 7 WITH AMENDMENT**

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

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