



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

January 19, 2021

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser
Chair, Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 7 – *Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation Expenses - Montgomery County Deer Donation Program*

Dear Madame Chair:

House Bill 7 expands the eligibility for the State income tax credit for expenses related to deer donation to individuals who participate in the Montgomery County Deer Donation Program.

Montgomery County's Deer Donation program is administered by the County's Office of Agriculture (OAG). This program encourages farmers and hunters to harvest more deer in a responsible manner by providing local, minimum-hassle deer collection sites. It is administered in partnership with William F. Willard Farm, LLC and KS Kuts to coordinate the collection, processing, and donation of venison to local area food banks. Hunters can drop off field dressed deer at two locations – one in Poolesville and the second in Damascus at the KS Kuts deer processing facility where the deer meat is cut, wrapped and made available to local food banks for people in need. OAG administers the annual contract which is used to pay for expenses associated with the cold boxes and processing of deer meat including the staff time and transportation costs etc.

Since 2004, about 2,500 deer have been collected through the program resulting in the donation of 88,000 pounds of venison to local food banks. According to Farmers & Hunters Feeding the Hungry, one donated deer can feed up to 200 people. House Bill 7 may encourage more hunters to participate in the County's Deer Donation Program.

For the aforementioned reasons, I support House Bill 7 and respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Marc Elrich

cc: Members of the Ways and Means Committee