

HB540 - Agriculture – University of Maryland Extension – Urban Farmer Assistance

House Appropriations Committee

February 22, 2022

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair McIntosh and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action supports HB540 to require two statewide extension agents dedicated to providing technical assistance and training for urban farmers. Specifically, these agents will specialize in production methods and crop management, and urban farm and agribusiness management.

The University of Maryland Extension is a fantastic resource for farmers. HB540 seeks to expand this resource to also provide expertise on the unique challenges that urban farmers face - especially licensing and permitting and the use of indoor and space-constrained areas, based on identified-needs from urban farmers themselves.

Providing this technical assistance to farmers facing these unique challenges will help incorporate our food system into our built up environments, allowing food to be grown and sold locally and enabling more people to pursue their path in one of Maryland's most significant industries.

Thank you and we ask for a favorable report.

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