



February 17, 2022

Re: House Bill 0540 (Senator Cory McCray)

Dear Senator McCray,

I am the owner and operator of New Brooklyn Farms, a 5 year-old urban farm business located in Mt. Rainier, MD. In 2019, I lead grassroots efforts to pass 2 pieces of legislation to expand urban farming in Prince George's County. I am also a member of the Farmer Advisory Council for the Fair Farms Campaign (Waterkeepers Chesapeake).

I am writing to express my full support of House Bill 0540 and your proposal to require the University of Maryland Extension to hire 2 extension agents dedicated to urban farm production methods/crop management and urban farm/agribusiness management.

When I established New Brooklyn Farms as a Benefit LLC company in 2017, I was benefited greatly from the support and camaraderie of Ms. Kim Rush Lynch, a former agriculture marketing specialist with the UMD Extension, and her colleague Ms. Ginger Myers. Ms. Rush Lynch and Ms. Myers provided me with a wealth of production, marketing, and business resources that led to successful crop planning and production, implementation of sound financial management practices, and connections to grant support via USDA/NRCS and other agencies. This support continues to serve as a key foundation to the success and longevity of New Brooklyn Farms, as a number of fellow MD urban farmers in my network can also attest.

In addition to the well-documented positive impacts on community health, education, and preservation, there are several case that display urban agriculture's economic viability. However, similar to its rural counterpart, the urban agriculture industry has risk & volatility (e.g. crop failure, natural disasters), as well as high barriers to entry (e.g land, equipment, infrastructure). I believe that urban agriculture requires similar support to reach its full economic potential – and the work that the UMD Extension does provides undoubtedly crucial support that it requires to continue to grow and thrive in MD.

Thank you again for your efforts thus far in proposing this bill. Please let me know how I can further support.

Best regards,

Doug Adams

Owner - New Brooklyn Farms, Benefit LLC

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