

Testimony before the Maryland House Appropriations Committee  
HB 540 Agriculture - University of Maryland Extension - Urban Farmer Assistance  
February 22, 2022  
Favorable

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the House of Delegates Appropriations Committee,

The Anne Arundel and Prince George's County Urban Agriculture Working Group was formed in 2021 for the development of an urban farming initiative. The work group is comprised of urban farmers and other urban agriculture stakeholders. The work group, working with Extension faculty, leads the urban farming initiative by planning educational workshops to assist urban farmers in topics such as business planning, land access and zoning regulations, integrated pest management, machinery and production technologies for vegetables, fruits, livestock, and high value specialty crops.

University of Maryland Extension has been a helpful resource to the farmer members of the Anne Arundel and Prince George's County Urban Agriculture Working Group. We would welcome additional UMD Extension faculty who could contribute to our work and provide additional educational and technical assistance on the topics of:

- Planning and scheduling crop planting and harvesting in urban areas, including outdoors, indoors, in greenhouses, and in high tunnel production systems
- Growing trials and production methods for crops grown in urban areas, including specialty crops such as heritage vegetables, ethnic vegetables, herbs, microgreens, and cut flowers
- Propagation and transplant production
- Certifications for Good Agricultural Practices
- Accounting and financial management
- Marketing
- Human resource management
- Land acquisition
- Insurance
- Licensing and permitting

These topics are important to urban farmers' success because they are the basics of good business practices, and the success of our urban farmers means a robust, circular economy that feeds and employs Marylanders and contributes to the health and wellbeing of our people and the planet.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge a favorable report on HB540.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Robinson  
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