



## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FARM BUREAU, INC.

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February 7, 2022

To: Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

From: Prince George's County Farm Bureau

Re: Support of SB0378 - Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland -Funding for Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission

On behalf of the Prince George's County Farm Bureau, I would like to express our support of SB0378 - Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland - Funding for Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC). This bill dedicates \$900,000 annually from the Cigarette Restitution Fund (CRF), that comes to the State every year in perpetuity, to be funded to the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland for their SMADC department.

SMADC has used the CRF to help farmers transition out of tobacco production into other sectors of agriculture, and has opened the doors to agritourism and other value-added programs to increase the viability of Southern Maryland farms. They have brought to light the extreme value of agriculture in this area and the role it plays in bringing fresh, locally produced agricultural products to our region and beyond. Their numerous projects, including the Regional Agricultural Center (RAC), have transformed and continue to transform the agricultural business economy of Southern Maryland. It is through their invaluable support that farmers have been able to continue to preserve the rich agricultural history of the area and reshape the farmer-consumer relationship in this developing region.

SMADC works very closely with the Prince George's County Farm Bureau and all of the agricultural industry partners including Maryland Farm Bureau, MARBIDCO, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and others. We strongly support the full funding of \$900,000 annually to the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland for the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission.

Best Regards,

Sincerely,

*Harrison B. Palmer*

Harrison Palmer

Prince George's County Farm Bureau