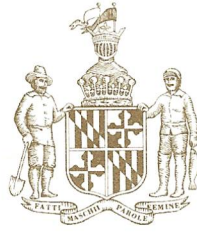


MARY BETH CAROZZA
Legislative District 38
Somerset, Wicomico,
and Worcester Counties

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee



Annapolis Office
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 314
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3645 · 301-858-3645
800-492-7122 Ext. 3645
Fax 410-841-3006 · 301-858-3006
MaryBeth.Carozza@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 9, 2021

The Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Bill 538 Land Use - Agritourism - Definition
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you, Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 538, which adds special events and occasions to the statewide definition of agritourism under § 4-212 of the Land Use Article.

The committee may recall Senate Bill 296 sponsored by Senator Gallion that would add camping to the statewide agritourism definition that passed this committee and the Senate unanimously. Senate Bill 538 would be an additional option for farm families to diversify, provide additional economic opportunity, and allow tourists to have more options to explore and experience our local farms.

I am especially proud of the leadership of the Worcester County Commissioners and Maryland's Coast, Office of Tourism for the extra effort they have been making to give our farm families more options to diversify and expand rather than selling their valuable farm land for development. Senate Bill 538 would be a successful tool in giving more local farms the opportunity to protect their way of life in new and creative ways.

Today my panel includes Melanie Pursel, Director of the Worcester County Office of Tourism and Kevin Atticks with Grow and Fortify who are in strong support and will further explain the direct benefits of this legislation.

I respectfully ask my colleagues and friends on the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for a favorable report on Senate Bill 538. It is an important local priority and will be a great opportunity for farmers across the state.