



Maryland Pork Producers Association

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Senate Bill 542 – Community Healthy Air Act

February 23, 2022

MPPA Position: OPPOSED

This bill mandates the establishment of a committee to develop an air quality sampling and monitoring protocol for the collection of air quality and public health data associated with large animal-feeding operations. The committee is to be co-chaired by the Dean of the University of Maryland School of Public Health and the Dean of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. These individuals are empowered to appoint the experts on the committee. After the protocol is developed, the Department of Environment is required to adopt the methodology and quantify the amount of air pollutants from animal feeding operations including ammonia, fine particulate matter, coarse particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, and other air pollutants subject to state or federal laws.

The Maryland Pork Producers Association is concerned that there could be a bias to the protocol as there is no one with any expertise in agriculture, specifically animal agriculture, to be appointed to the committee. Additionally, no one with expertise in animal feeding operations is required to be part of the peer review process. We also have concerns about exactly what is to be measured. The bill simply states “amount.” There are a variety of different measures of “amount” including volume or concentration, each of which would yield different information. Finally, spatial parameters should be more clearly defined. “Coming out of” animal feeding operations could mean monitoring right at the fan or ventilation outlet which would detect much different “amounts” of pollutants than at 500 feet or even at the closest home which in many cases could be miles away.

Pork producers in Maryland have been working with EPA and complying with any reporting requirements on the federal level. EPA has plans to continue working toward a national protocol monitoring network of pollutants from animal feeding operations under the Clean Air Act. EPA has a decade of work which has been done toward this effort already as well as the expertise and resources to carry out such monitoring.

Monitoring by MDE at the state level would require considerable resources and potentially expertise that they do not currently have. This monitoring effort could cost millions and millions of dollars. Pork producers in Maryland believe those resources could be used better to continue all of the great conservation work we have already been doing to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Maryland Pork Producers urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 798 due to the potential bias of the committee, the resources required to carry out a monitoring effort on the state level, and the national process already occurring at EPA.

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