



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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March 2, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of HB 960 - Natural Resources – Forest Mitigation Banks and the Forest Conservation Fund – Alterations**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 960, legislation that removes the requirement that a forest mitigation bank had to be approved on or before December 31, 2020, to be eligible, and it extends the deadline from 2 years to 5 or from 3 growing seasons to 6 for the Department of Natural Resources to accomplish the reforestation or afforestation for which certain money is deposited to the Forest Conservation Fund.

A bill last year (HB991) was amended at the end of session to include the deadline date. Unfortunately, that date kicked out many projects that had been in the pipeline for several years and had been held up because of the Attorney General's ruling in 2020. This bill looks to correct that unintended consequence and allow those projects to complete the long and expensive process.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 960 AND REQUEST A FAVORABLE REPORT

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

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