



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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February 25, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: Support of HB855 – Agriculture - Urban Agriculture Water and Power Infrastructure Grant Program and Fund - Establishment

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 855. This bill establishes the Urban Agriculture Water and Power Infrastructure Grant Program in the Department of Agriculture to increase the viability of urban farming and community gardens and improve access to urban-grown foods. The Urban Agriculture Water and Power Infrastructure Grant Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund that is funded through the Program Open Space payback money. The program is to be funded for four years starting in FY24 at \$500,000 per year.

Over the years, several urban farmers have found that trying to farm vacant lots in urban areas have had issues with getting water and power to the property. This statewide bill would offer grant funds to assist with the cost of purchasing and installing water and power infrastructure needed to farm the property. In addition to equipment, the fund can be used to cover local/county permits needed to install the water or power infrastructure.

**Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:** We support and encourage urban farming/agriculture. We support grant programs to provide infrastructure for urban farms.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 855 AND ENCOURAGES A FAVORABLE REPORT.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

*For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396*