



3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

January 13, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of HB 75 - Maryland Agricultural Commission – Hemp Industry Member**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 75, legislation that would increase the number of members on the Maryland Agricultural Commission by adding a member to represent one of the fastest growing agricultural enterprises in Maryland – the Hemp Industry.

The Maryland Agricultural Commission is appointed by the Governor and serves as an advisory body to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. Members on the Commission are tasked to formulate and make proposals for the advancement of Maryland agriculture.

This is very timely legislation because the federal Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, or better known as the 2018 Farm Bill, altered certain federal authority relating to the production and marketing of hemp and removes hemp from the federal Controlled Substances Act. This caused a huge increase in the number of farmers interested in growing hemp in Maryland.

The ability to grow hemp does not come without its challenges however, and as such it would be beneficial to have a voice on the Maryland Agricultural Commission to represent that industry.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:

- We support the right of Maryland farmers to grow hemp as an agricultural crop.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 75 AND REQUEST A FAVORABLE REPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson".

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

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