



House Bill 12 – Worcester County-Buildings Used for Agritourism

Position: Favorable

The Maryland REALTORS®, on behalf of the Coastal Association of Realtors ® supports HB 12 which would add the county to a list of participating Maryland counties to allow agritourism in existing building structures without permitting changes under specific requirements while still adhering to International Building Code.

Agritourism is growing across the state as small businesses and property owners in Southern Maryland, Western Maryland and our beautiful Eastern Shore diversify into new economic opportunities to combat declining revenues. The last agricultural census completed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service in 2017 indicated there were 295 agritourism farms in Maryland, with revenues of nearly \$10 million.

These innovative measures will help protect generational farming and expand the current business model while simultaneously spurring more investment in the heritage of Maryland farms and property owners. For the above reasons, the REALTORS® recommend a favorable report.

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