



March 11, 2022

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chairman  
House Environment and Transportation Committee

**Re: House Bill 1415 - Grading and Sediment Control Plans - Agricultural Land Management Practices – Definition**

Position: **OPPOSE**

Chairman Barve & Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) we express our **opposition** for House Bill 1415, Grading and Sediment Control Plans - Agricultural Land Management Practices – Definition. This bill would permit agricultural landowners to conduct timber clearing and land grading, without an approved erosion and sediment control plan. The requirement of an erosion and sediment control plan for a clearing and grading operation has always been backed by Maryland law along with the current definition of "agricultural land management practices".

Erosion and Sediment control plans provide a thorough assessment of erosion conditions that are created from any proposed grading and implement the necessary sediment controls to minimize runoff during land disturbances. Our districts provide current landowners with two options for an intended timber removal operation:

1. Obtain approval of an **Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for Forest Harvest Operations** not including stump removal or grading.
2. Obtain approval of a standard **Erosion and Sediment Control Plan** to include the desired tree removal and desired land grading.

The result of this bill, as written, would be that land clearing and grading operations could occur without needed erosion and sediment controls being present. Grading could also occur without any assessment as to the effect of changes to drainage patterns inside and outside the limits of the disturbed site, including adjacent properties, and Chesapeake Bay tributaries. We respectfully request an **UNFAVORABLE** report of House Bill 1415. Thank you for your kind consideration and attention to this legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director  
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts