



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

February 16, 2022

To: House Environment & Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of HB 673 - Land Use - Agritourism - Definition**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 673, legislation that adds to the definition of "agritourism" to include special events and occasions conducted on a farm that generates income from an agricultural activity.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many people are looking for more open air opportunities to host meetings and special events. Allowing farms the opportunity to offer these events as an accessory to their working farm allows them to make needed additional income to offset when the farming margins are tight. Allowing farms to diversify so they can improve their income generated from the farm, should be Maryland's top priority if there is to be increased financial sustainability for our farms in the future.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy:

- We support wedding and event venues as an accessory use on a working farm.
- Agritourism should be defined as activities conducted on a farm and offered to the public or to invited groups for the purpose of education, recreation, or active involvement in the farm operation.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 673 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