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Testimony in Support of
House Bill 562 - Consumer Protection - Right to Repair - Farm Equipment
House Economic Matters Committee
February 23, 2022

The Rural Maryland Council supports House Bill 562 - Consumer Protection - Right to Repair - Farm Equipment. This bill will save Maryland Farmers money and valuable time by allowing them to fix their own farm equipment instead of being forced to take their farming equipment to the commercial dealer to be fixed. This will be done by requiring manufacturers to make available certain documents, updates, or information to independent repair providers or equipment owners to for the proper diagnosis, maintenance, or repair of the farm equipment. Our farmers work hard to provide the State and the rest of the country with food and other materials to keep the country running. Making farm equipment repair possible without the commercial providers allows farmers to keep the finances they have earned and saves them valuable time needed to do work on the farm.

Farmers are currently being forced to take their equipment back to the manufactures that produce them because of parts, information, and software updates being withheld from by the manufactures. This can be not only unnecessarily costly, but also time consuming to farmers. When a piece of crucial equipment breaks, instead of a farmer or independent repairer fixing the equipment at that time, the equipment must be fixed by the manufacture, costing these farmers both additional time and money. This bill will allow farmers to fix their own equipment and at the time of the issue and get back to harvesting their crops.

The movement for farmers to be able to repair their own equipment has gained attention across the country with many states already passing legislation to allow the right to repair farm equipment, and just recently being introduced to the U.S Senate by Senator Jon Tester of Montana. Maryland should join these states in allowing farmers to fix their farm equipment.

The Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable support of House Bill 562.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.

“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”