



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

February 20, 2023

To: House Economic Matters Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of HB 987 - Alcoholic Beverages – Use of Alcoholic Beverages for Educational Purposes**

On behalf of our Farm Bureau member families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in support of HB 987. This bill authorizes college students who are at least 18 years old and under the age of 21 years to taste the alcoholic beverages while participating in a course or program in enology, fermenting, brewing, or hospitality and tourism offered by a qualified institution of higher education without criminal penalty to the student, instructor, or institution of higher education.

As the on-farm alcohol sector of agriculture continues to grow in Maryland, having the expertise to make these businesses work is essential. We thank the University of Maryland for adding the fermentation classes to their class offerings for college students. These classes prepare the next generation to take over the family operation and/or start new businesses over their own. Addressing this technicality brought forward in this bill is essential to generating the next generation of experts.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 551 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colby Ferguson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations

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