



# Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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March 8, 2023

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support with Amendment of SB 779 - Natural Resources - Female Deer Hunting Contests - Authorization**

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support with amendment of SB 779, legislation that authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to allow a person, for the management of the deer population in the State, to sponsor, conduct, or participate in an existing, random contest in the State held during the month of January that has the objective of harvesting a female deer.

Crop damage created by deer is nearly \$50 per acre today. These numbers are even higher on the Eastern Shore. The lower shore county Farm Bureau's along with the Maryland Grain Producers and several local farms worked together in 2019 to set up what they call a Doe Harvest Challenge that focuses on getting hunters to come out and hunt at the very end of the hunting season. The focus is to address the overpopulation of deer on the lower shore. Since the vast majority of hunters hunt only for bucks, the female deer population has exploded in this area. This event is only for female deer and is for the sole purpose of reducing the overpopulation. The deer that are harvested are either kept by the hunter or are donated to the local food bank and the cost of the processing is covered by the sponsors of the event. We believe the bill language is correct but was put in the wrong section of the law.

**MDFB requests an amendment to move this new language from 10-427 of the Natural Resources Article to 10-404 of the Natural Resources Article and create a new 10-404 (e)(2)(vi).**

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 779 WITH AN AMENDMENT**

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*