

KATIE FRY HESTER
Legislative District 9
Howard and Montgomery Counties

Education, Energy, and
Environment Committee

Chair, Joint Committee on
Cybersecurity, Information Technology
and Biotechnology



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of SB124 – Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

January 22nd, 2023

Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee, thank you for your consideration of SB124.

In 2021, this Committee's predecessor established the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council to achieve four primary goals:

- 1.) To address the immediate food insecurity crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic,
- 2.) To develop equitable and sustainable policy recommendations to increase our state's long-term food system resiliency,
- 3.) To expand the impact of existing local food councils, and
- 4.) To develop a strategic plan for the state to increase the production and procurement of Maryland Certified Food.

I am extremely proud of the work this Council has done over the past two years, and am coming back this year with legislation to formally move the FSRC into MDEM's Office of Resilience. This fulfills the FSRC's statutory requirement to consider any changes to its organization and structure by the end of calendar year 2022. This legislation also makes a few technical changes to the Council's governing code based on the elevation of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency's to a cabinet-level Department. Combined, these changes will enable for greater efficiency and mission alignment within the Department.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 124.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Fry Hester".

Senator Katie Fry Hester
Howard & Montgomery Counties