



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: HB 152 - Department of Agriculture - Urban
Agriculture Grant Fund

SPONSOR: Delegate Wells

HEARING DATE: February 8, 2023

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS HB 152 - Department of Agriculture - Urban Agriculture Grant Fund**, which expands the Urban Agriculture Grant Program and the Urban Agriculture Grant Fund to apply to agricultural producers and qualified applicants in an urban area beyond Baltimore City. The bill also requires the Governor to appropriate \$250,000 to the fund during fiscal 2025 through 2029.

This legislation will support, expand and increase the growth and viability of urban agriculture statewide while increasing access to healthy, urban-grown foods.

HB 152 is consistent with recent USDA efforts to support urban agriculture. The program would be administered and regulated by the Maryland Department of Agriculture according to the very specific and rigorous criteria re: training, education and outreach laid out in HB 152.

HB 152 has the potential to improve equitable access to healthy and fresh food in urban areas that may be underserved by traditional grocery outlets, providing another tool to reduce food insecurity and improve overall health.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 0152** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.