

Adam LaRose and Julia Lemp, Capital Area Food Bank
HB0032 – Permanently Establishing the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council
Environment and Transportation Committee
Hearing Date 2/1/2023 at 3pm
Testimony of SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Capital Area Food Bank, we offer our support for HB0032 to establish the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council within the Office of Resilience in the Maryland Department of Emergency Management.

The Capital Area Food Bank serves over 200,000 food insecure residents in the two largest counties in Maryland, Prince George’s and Montgomery. Last year, we distributed over 23 million meals to Maryland clients through a partner network of 138 nonprofit organizations and distribution sites.

As an active member of the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council since its inception in 2021, we have seen firsthand the influence and impact of the Council on food systems and, particularly, food insecurity throughout our state. We have proudly supported both of the Council’s annual reports to the Maryland General Assembly outlining Council activities and suggestions for impact, and have stood with the Council in support of key legislation to strengthen food systems and reduce food insecurity.

The Council brings together a diverse array of voices throughout our state’s food system to host robust conversation and align on policies and practices that will have the greatest positive impact on our local agricultural producers, food systems, and – of critical importance to us – on anti-hunger practices and our neighbors facing food insecurity. The permanent establishment of the Council under the Maryland Department of Emergency Management is crucial to the continuation of the great work the Council has done over the past two years and for future innovative practices to enhance food system resiliency across the state.

We strongly encourage a favorable report on HB0032, and appreciate your consideration. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have.