

**DATE:** January 26, 2023  
**BILL NO.:** House Bill 8  
**COMMITTEE:** House Committee on Environment and Transportation  
**TITLE:** Counties and State Legislative Districts - Food Environment Reports  
**SPONSORS:** Del. Amprey

### **Letter of Information**

#### **Description of Bill:**

House Bill 8 requires the Department of Housing and Community Development, Department of Planning, Department of Human Services, and the Department of Agriculture to jointly produce a report for each county and state legislative district on the food environment of the county or district every other year, for a total of 71 new reports.

#### **Background and Analysis:**

Food insecurity is a crisis in communities throughout Maryland, even in communities that are among the wealthiest jurisdictions in the country. In recognition of the seriousness of this problem and in order to address this issue, the [Maryland Food System Resiliency Council](#) was established in 2021. In fact, the Council produces an extensive annual report with policy recommendations. The [Council's 2022 report](#) notes that much of the information on food insecurity exists across a variety of platforms and recommends a single report, which would be more comprehensive, user-friendly, and respectful of staff resources than the proposed 71 reports.

#### **Conclusion**

While the Department is not a member of the Maryland Food Resiliency Council, we commend the work of the 33 members of the Council and the Department of Emergency Management, which staffs the Council. We would defer to the expertise of the Council on this matter, and recommend a single statewide food system map incorporating data elements from existing maps to provide a holistic view of existing need, services, and gaps. We believe the Council would be the appropriate entity to oversee this project.