



Maryland Farm Bureau

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February 12, 2024

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc

RE: **Opposition of HB0210 Maryland Building Performance Standards – Fossil Fuel Use and Electric-Ready Standards**

On behalf of the nearly 9,500 Farm Bureau families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in opposition to HB0210. This bill would require the Maryland Department of Labor to adopt, on or before January 1, 2025, and as part of the Maryland Building Performance Standards, a requirement that new buildings meet all energy demands of the building without the use of fossil fuels and an electric-ready standard for certain buildings.

HB0210 jeopardizes farm viability in Maryland. It looks to require all new buildings to be electric ready which is not economically feasible for our farmers. Electrification projects often involve significant upfront costs, including the installation of power lines, transformers, and other infrastructure. If these costs are passed on to new construction projects, it could increase the financial burden on farmers looking to build support structures. Higher construction and operational costs can strain the finances of farmers and construction projects. Small-scale farmers or those with limited resources may find it challenging to afford the increased expenses associated with electrification, potentially hindering their ability to build or upgrade support structures. If the electrification plans rely heavily on a centralized grid, disruptions or inefficiencies in the power supply could negatively impact the reliability of electricity for farmers. Dependence on a single source may increase vulnerability to power outages.

Farmers facing increased costs may find it harder to compete in the market. This could be particularly true with neighboring states having more favorable conditions for agricultural development, leading to a decline in the competitiveness of local farmers.

MDFB Policy: We strongly support a comprehensive, long-term energy policy that fully utilizes domestic energy resources and aggressively promotes the access, availability, and affordability for agriculture.

Maryland Farm Bureau Respectfully Opposes HB0210

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', with a horizontal line above it.

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations

Please contact Tyler Hough at (443) 878-4045 with any questions