



Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035

410-922-3426 | www.mdfarmbureau.com

To: Health and Government Operations Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

RE: **Opposition of HB1421 Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics - Gene Structure- and Function-Modifying Products – Labeling**

On behalf of our nearly 9,500 Farm Bureau families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in opposition to HB1421. This bill prohibits and restricts the marketing and labeling of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) commodities grown in the state. We strongly oppose state-mandated labeling of these products and believe only the federal government policy should be utilized on this issue.

HB1421 is proposed as legislation to require a Maryland-specific label for genetically engineered food. The US federal government has already passed legislation to create a standard set for human food that is or may be genetically engineered or bioengineered. This Bioengineered Food Disclosure Law is monitored by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and this law has been in place since 2016. The effort to monitor GMOs has been conducted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Federal regulation has ensured that bioengineered foods are safe and indifferent to other foods produced in any other way. Other organizations have supported this conclusion such as the American Medical Association (AMA), American Association for the Advancement of Science, and World Health Organization.

This bill stands on the aspect of marketing rather than safety. Labels should not mislead consumers. Labeling should be left and entrusted in the federal framework as there is no reason for Maryland to differentiate their labeling from these standards. This new labeling requirement could limit our farmers' consumer base and disrupt their processes as they attempt to promote their product, possibly leading to an increase in food costs. Maryland Farm Bureau cannot



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support this bill as it is unnecessary and disregards the federal framework already in place for Genetically Modified Organisms.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We oppose legislation that would restrict the use of GMO commodities grown in the state. We support GMO policy decisions only at the federal government level and not at the state government level. We oppose state-mandated labeling of products made with GMO crops.

Maryland Farm Bureau Respectfully Opposes HB1421.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Hough". The signature is written over a horizontal line that extends to the left.

Tyler Hough

Director of Government Relations

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