

Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Delegate C.T. Wilson, Chair
Members of the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee &
House Economic Matters Committee

Dear Senators and Delegates,

I was born and raised on my family's farm along the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and have seen the land around me get developed consistently throughout my life, and each new shopping center, solar field, sports complex, and cookie-cutter neighborhood that takes over rich soil and open fields breaks my heart.

Let the counties decide for themselves what development is best for them. How can someone at the Public Service Commission in Baltimore, who may have never felt the healing powers of being out in nature and hearing the birds rather than the deafening sound of a highway or the polluted view of skyscrapers or solar fields, decide what is best for rural communities who live and breathe agriculture. The Eastern Shore of Maryland, and Maryland in general thrive off of farming, it is not only how they make a living, but it is their way of life. Taking away locals' voice in deciding what gets taken over by solar fields and what stays farmland is unconstitutional and inhumane, in my opinion.

If you can't see it from an agricultural point of view, look at it economically: agriculture is Maryland's largest commercial industry, and employs thousands of Marylanders, contributing billions of dollars to the state's economy. Taking away farmers' land, means taking away the economic growth farming provides to the state.

Without farmers, you wouldn't have food to eat. If you take away their land, you are also taking away food from your table and thousands of others' while also hurting the state's economy.

Farms make Maryland the incredible state that it is, please do not take away our greatest asset.

Why not redevelop the blighted areas in already developed towns and cities, instead of taking over hundreds of thousands of acres of our productive farmland and food supply?

Sincerely,
Lillian Howard
Cecil County, MD