

ORAL Testimony – 2 minutes
Mason Farms Produce LLC

February 28, 2025

SB0931 - Public Utilities – Generating Station – Generation and Siting
In OPPOSITION

My name is Stephen Kraszewski, and I belong to a 5th generation family organic farm in Queen Anne’s County. I’m also a husband and a father. A caretaker. A steward for the land. One word that comes to mind as I think about what this all means: LEGACY.

Farming families, farming communities are built on legacies, shared from one generation to the next. Some legacies span multiple generations - like an heirloom passed down. Their mark on the land runs deep and transcends merely occupying the land, becoming more than the sum of its parts.

Some legacies are just beginning or have yet to begin – fledgling but determined to anchor themselves, spreading their roots. My own legacy joined with my wife’s heritage and the support not to mention the success we enjoy was built amongst friends, neighbors, businesses and indeed spreads across multiple industries because few sectors touch or influence other parts of our economy like agriculture can.

These old and new generations should be inheriting something secure, grounded, dependable. I have learned that cultivating a farm and its relationships is so much like developing the soil: it takes time, investment, and careful stewardship. But we also know this can all unravel quickly.

What happens when the backbone of a farmer’s livelihoods is uprooted? How will this committee, who is almost wholly tasked with funding Maryland agriculture and the programs and institutions that help anchor it, respond when agriculture’s pillars are toppled and the ground upheaved.

The bottom line is Maryland farming is a hedge against climate change. Our crops and soil can capture and store carbon from the air. Our conservation practices keep the rain where it falls. The soil can hold on to moisture for a drought. Our covers keep living roots in the soil.

I ask this committee to give an unfavorable report on SB0931. Thank you.