



Formerly called the Humane  
Society of the United States

## Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance

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February 25, 2025

Maryland Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 11 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: **Veterinary Support for SB 806:** Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice-Chair Kagan and members of the committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance (HumaneVMA), a national organization of more than 8,000 veterinary professional members (including 60 Maryland veterinarians) with a focus on the health and welfare of all animals, including those raised for food. We strongly support SB 806, legislation that would phase out the cruel cage-confinement of egg-laying hens.

Animals should be allowed to engage in basic movements and postural adjustments. An abundance of scientific evidence demonstrates that intensive confinement systems are detrimental to the physical and psychological welfare of farm animals and create public health concerns.

The prestigious Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production—a panel of experts including a former veterinary school dean and a Secretary of the USDA—concluded “...that the most intensive confinement systems, such as . . . battery cages for poultry...prevent the animal from a normal range of movement and constitute inhumane treatment.”<sup>i</sup> The Commission recommended phasing out the most inhumane production practices, including battery cages for egg-laying hens, to reduce the “risks to public health and improve animal well-being.” Recent studies support the significant animal welfare benefits of cage-free systems.

Modern replacements for this extreme confinement method already exist, are in widespread commercial use, and are economically practical. Cage-free systems allow birds to move freely through their environment and to engage in natural behaviors—such as dustbathing, nesting and perching—which are thwarted by cage confinement.

We respectfully encourage the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to support SB 806 to protect egg-laying hens by ending the use of inhumane cage confinement in the state and requiring that all eggs sold in Maryland come from cage-free hens. SB 806 will ensure a more humane, safer, and sustainable food system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carrie B. Waters".

Carrie B. Waters, DVM, PhD, JD, DACVIM  
Maryland State Representative  
Humane Veterinary Medical Alliance (HumaneVMA)

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<sup>i</sup> Pew Commission on Industrial Farm Production, Putting Meat on the Table: Industrial Farm Production in America, 2008, p. 38