



Maryland Grain Producers Association  
118 Dundee Ave, Chester, MD 21619  
Lindsay.mdag@gmail.com (p) 443-262-8491  
www.marylandgrain.com

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House Bill 834 - Agriculture - Confinement of Egg-Laying Hens in Commercial Egg Production – Prohibitions

Committee: Environment and Transportation

MGPA Position: OPPOSE

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) serves as the voice of grain farmers growing corn, wheat, barley and sorghum across the state. MGPA opposes House Bill 834 which would prohibit the production of non-cage free eggs in Maryland for farms with more than 5,000 birds after January 1, 2030.

MGPA supports the responsible and humane care of egg-laying hens which is currently being done in both caged and cage-free systems in Maryland. Currently, egg-laying hens in Maryland consume nearly 3 million bushels of corn directly from Maryland farmers every year. This is 4% of Maryland total corn production and a value of nearly \$14M to Maryland farmers.

While some of these farms have already begun the transition to cage-free houses and plan to continue, it is a long and expensive transition. The prohibition of non-cage-free housing systems at the beginning of 2030 is not a realistic or feasible timeline for some of the family farms operating in this space. Additionally, the threat of avian influenza wiping out these farms makes it difficult to justify a huge capital investment for the family farms.

MGPA believes the market is moving in this direction in a manner and at a speed that is logistically and financially feasible without legislation.

We urge your unfavorable report on House Bill 834.