



**Humane  
World for  
Animals**

Formerly called the Humane  
Society of the United States and  
Humane Society International

# Support SB 806/HB 834, the cage-free egg bill



## Marylanders deserve safer, affordable, more humane eggs

Due to enormous public opposition to confining farm animals in ultra-restrictive cages, it's now clear that the future of egg production is cage-free. SB 806/HB 834, sponsored by Sen. Benjamin Kramer and Del. Jen Terrasa, would ensure that, after a phase-in period, eggs produced or sold in Maryland come from cage-free operations that adhere to the egg industry's own guidelines. This bill will promote food safety, advance animal welfare and provide a business-friendly regulatory scheme.

## Increases animal welfare and lowers food safety risks

Millions of hens in the egg industry in the U.S. are still confined in barren cages so small they can't even flap their wings. These conditions are not only cruel for the birds, but cage systems have been associated with higher rates of salmonella, a disease that can be deadly—especially in young children and the elderly. Evidence indicates that cage-free systems reduce salmonella risks.

## Focuses solely on eggs and keeps costs down

**This measure does not impact any other sector of animal agriculture, such as Perdue or any other broiler (meat) chicken producer.** Production cost differential between cage and cage-free housing systems is minimal. Since cage-free eggs will become the baseline standard, retail markup will actually **decline** as grocery stores market the cage-free eggs as their "value" egg. Retailers will use these low-priced, cage-free eggs to draw foot traffic, just as they do today with cage eggs.

## Modest, industry-written standards

The guidelines written in SB 806/HB 834 for cage-free systems merely require 1 square foot per bird. The bill simply implements the United Egg Producers' own cage-free standards.

## Demand for change: Commercial egg-buyers

This measure codifies where the market is already going. For example: Costco, McDonald's, Burger King, Popeye's, Denny's, IHOP, Applebee's, Arby's, Olive Garden, Panera Bread, Taco Bell, Shake Shack, Starbucks, Outback Steakhouse, The Cheesecake Factory, Nestle, General Mills, Kraft Heinz, Unilever, Mondelez, Conagra Brands and many other companies already use (or are on track to use) 100% cage-free eggs in the U.S. Almost all of these companies are going to get to cage-free before or by the deadline in SB 806/HB 834.

## The majority of Maryland voters support cage-free legislation

A Hart Research survey found that a strong majority (two-thirds) of Marylanders want the state legislature to pass cage-free legislation. Even after hearing claims against the bill, support for cage-free legislation remains unchanged among Maryland voters.

