

## Testimony in Support of SB806/HBo834

Members of the Maryland Legislature,

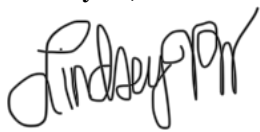
My name is Lindsey Van Wagner, and I live in Rockville, Maryland. I am writing in strong support of SB806/HBo834, which would ban the sale of eggs from battery-caged hens. As someone who raises backyard chickens, I see every day how important it is for hens to have space to move, forage, and express their natural behaviors. Keeping them crammed in tiny cages is not only cruel but completely unnecessary.

Chickens are intelligent, social animals. My hens love to scratch in the dirt, stretch their wings, take dust baths, and perch up high. These are not luxuries—they are basic needs. When I see my chickens enjoying their space, I can't imagine subjecting them to the extreme confinement that battery cages impose. In fact, my hens were all stuck under cover yesterday before I shoveled the snow and once I created more space for them, they were so happy to walk around! They are very lucky animals but unfortunately they are in the minority. It is heartbreaking to think that millions of hens are forced to live their entire lives in a space smaller than a sheet of paper, unable to even spread their wings.

Beyond the ethical concerns, healthier, less-stressed hens lay better-quality eggs. I've experienced firsthand how much healthier and stronger the eggs from my free-roaming chickens are compared to those from caged systems. [Research backs this up](#), showing that cage-free eggs often have lower risks of contamination. If Maryland passes this bill, consumers will benefit from safer, higher-quality eggs, and egg producers will be encouraged to move toward more humane practices.

I urge you to pass SB806/HBo834 and ensure that Maryland no longer allows the sale of eggs from battery-caged hens. No animal should have to endure such extreme suffering, especially when better alternatives are available and already working in other states.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lindsey Van Wagner', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lindsey Van Wagner

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