

Garrett County Farm Bureau  
P. O. Box 161  
McHenry, MD 21541

February 12, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman  
100 State Circle  
Annapolis, MD

The Environment and Transportation Committee,

We are writing this in support of HB 650 - The Maryland Fair and Education Promise Act. Funding from the Special Fund has been making an important contribution to our community for many years.

The Garrett County Fair has been receiving reimbursement for the cost of prizes given to the winners of the exhibitor competitions. This encourages them to maintain an abundance of these opportunities which stimulates learning of the necessary skills to participate among the competitors as well as enlightenment of the people that view the competitions. These competitions are also a great way to help nurture cultural skills within the community. I suspect you would be amazed to see the hand crafted, traditional quilts that are entered in the quilt competition at the Garrett County Fair.

The Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation helps support our agricultural teachers, curriculums and activities by coordinating the efforts of the agricultural education community and maintenance of mobile classrooms which allow students around the state to learn in a hands-on environment about where and how their food is produced. These mobile classrooms are in Garrett County on a regular basis.

The Special Fund helps the Garrett County Future Farmers of America (FFA) build life, business and leadership skills in addition to agricultural knowledge through their program. Many, many farmers in Garrett County are graduates of the FFA.

We understand that this may be a difficult year to discuss a funding request but we urge you to consider that this is not new funding. The Special Fund was created to provide a positive service with gambling revenues. It is shrinking because that gambling revenue is being produced in a different way as people gamble in a different way. We are simply trying to make an adjustment to follow where the revenue is being generated now.

In the big picture, this funding has a positive impact on a lot of people in all counties with very little money. We hope you can help.

Thank you for your consideration,

Billy Bishoff  
Garrett County Farm Bureau