



Maryland Farm Bureau

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February 26, 2025

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

RE: Support of SB544 - Food Establishments - Portable Chemical Toilets

On behalf of the nearly 8,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I submit written testimony in favor of SB544 Food Establishments - Portable Chemical Toilets. This legislation would authorize certain food establishments, including agritourism businesses, limited wineries, and farm breweries, to meet lavatory requirements by providing portable chemical toilets.

Agritourism businesses, such as farms that host visitors, vineyards, and breweries, play a crucial role in Maryland's economy. They promote local agriculture, create jobs, and contribute to the state's rural development. However, many of these businesses operate in rural locations where the installation of permanent restroom facilities is costly and impractical due to land use constraints and environmental considerations. Senate Bill 544 provides a practical and cost-effective solution that allows these businesses to remain compliant with health regulations while continuing to serve their customers.

By allowing the use of portable chemical toilets, this bill ensures that agritourism businesses can provide necessary sanitation facilities without facing undue financial burdens. Portable restrooms, when properly maintained, meet health and safety standards and provide a sanitary option for visitors. Moreover, this measure helps maintain the integrity of agricultural lands by reducing the need for extensive infrastructure changes that could impact farming operations.

Supporting Senate Bill 544 aligns with Maryland's commitment to fostering its agricultural economy and promoting sustainable tourism. The bill will enable small farm-based businesses to expand their offerings, enhance customer experiences, and contribute more significantly to local economies. Furthermore, it acknowledges the unique needs of agritourism enterprises and provides them with a viable path to compliance without unnecessary regulatory hurdles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', with a horizontal line above it.

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations

Please reach out to Tyler Hough, though@marylandfb.org, with any questions