



February 14, 2025

**House Bill 0907- Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property - Alterations
House Ways and Means Committee**

Position: Support

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Communitas Farm is a one-acre vegetable farm located in Baltimore County. Established in 2022, we grow seasonal vegetables, herbs, and melons using regenerative and organic growing practices. We are not certified organic but follow USDA's organic growing standards. Our commitment to stewardship extends to both the land and the community. We offer fresh produce at our self-serve farm stand, provide 26-week CSA subscriptions, attend the Mt. Washington Farmer's Market in Baltimore City, and distribute to other local small businesses.

Communitas Farm writes to support House Bill 0907- Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property - Alterations. In 2014, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB223 - Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property – Applicability which expanded the urban farm property tax credit beyond Baltimore City to the entire State of Maryland. HB0907 clarifies some important aspects of the Urban Farm Property Tax Credit and removes unnecessary restrictions that have created barriers to accessing the credit. This bill provides the framework for an urban farm property tax credit and grants each county the ability to implement county-level legislation that best fits the needs of their local residents and governance within the guidelines of HB0907.

The Urban Farm Property increases healthy food access across Maryland by:

- Making urban farming more economically viable.
- Encouraging farms to support their local community or donate food to food banks by requiring farmers to sell or donate at least \$1,000 worth of farm goods.
- Creating stability through a multi-year tax benefit.
- Encouraging environmentally responsible practices through required and optional relationships with the county Soil Conservation Districts.
- Promoting land access for underserved farmers by providing an incentive for landowners to lease property to urban farmers.

Beginning farmers face myriad economic and environmental challenges. A holistic approach is needed to ensure farming remains a viable vocation for the next generation of farmers. This bill would help farmers access land and capital, the biggest obstacles facing beginning farmers, as noted by [USDA](#).¹

Urban farms are diverse in their operations and their existence allows residents to see where their food comes from, promotes healthy food habits, and supports a healthier environment. HB0907 recognizes the diversity of farm operations, the land they grow on, and the urban locations where they may exist. We fully support this bill and we respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 0907 to ensure a resilient and robust food system for all of Maryland. Thank you.

For more information, please contact:
Nick Healy, Co-Owner, Communitas Farm
443-468-5610 | nick@communitasfarm.com

References:

1. <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/blog/access-land-capital-biggest-obstacle-beginning-farmers>

