

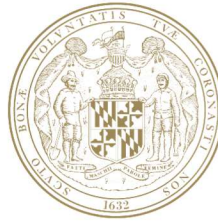
# **HB 175 rural caucus letter of support for senate.p**

Uploaded by: Natalie Ziegler

Position: FAV

JEFFERSON L. GHRIST  
Co-CHAIR

NATALIE ZIEGLER  
Co-CHAIR



H. KEVIN ANDERSON  
TERRY BAKER  
KEVIN B. HORNBERGER  
ANDRE V. JOHNSON, JR.  
STEVE JOHNSON  
SHEREE SAMPLE-HUGHES

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
HOUSE RURAL CAUCUS

April 1, 2026

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Honorable Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

On behalf of the Rural Caucus, we are writing to express our support for **HB175 Income Tax Credit – Venison Donations – Alterations**.

This bill would increase the limit on the amount of tax credits an individual could receive for donating venison meat they obtained through hunting to a local food bank. This tax credit increase would support rural communities by incentivizing hunting to combat the overpopulation of deer while increasing food in local food banks.

For these reasons, the Rural Caucus supports HB175 and requests a favorable report.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jefferson L. Ghrist".

Delegate Jefferson L. Ghrist  
*Co-Chair*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natalie Ziegler".

Delegate Natalie Ziegler  
*Co-Chair*

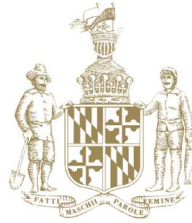
# **HB 175 sponsor testimony for senate hearing.pdf**

Uploaded by: Natalie Ziegler

Position: FAV

NATALIE ZIEGLER  
Legislative District 9A  
Howard and Montgomery Counties

Environment and Transportation  
Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 214  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3352  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3352  
Natalie.Ziegler@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB 175  
Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations**

Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and honorable members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present House Bill 175 - Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation - Alterations. This bill increases the maximum tax credit an individual may claim for donating venison to food banks or other charitable organizations from \$300 to \$600.

According to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, farmers across Maryland have faced \$10 million in economic losses due to wildlife damage, 77% of which are caused by deer. In addition to agricultural impact, the Department of Natural Resources reported that in 2021, 30,000-35,000 collisions were caused by deer. Unchecked deer populations eat and damage forest understories, hindering reforestation efforts and our state's goal to plant 5 million trees by 2031. Deer control is also critical in the mitigation of Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses.

The harvest of antlerless deer is a cornerstone of Maryland's deer management program, relying on the participation of civilian hunters. Currently, Maryland hunters can claim \$75 per donated deer, with a maximum tax credit of \$300 for any taxable year. The \$75 tax credit helps to pay most, but not all, of the cost to process a deer for donation. An average deer can yield 40-50 pounds of venison. This has been a successful program, incentivizing hunters to contribute to food banks while also controlling the states' deer populations. As food banks have recently seen an increase in demand, these contributions are even more important. By doubling the \$300 limit to \$600, we can increase the effectiveness of this program, supplying our state's food banks with venison and mitigating the economic losses caused by deer overpopulation.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask for a favorable report on House Bill 175.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Natalie Ziegler".

Delegate Natalie Ziegler  
Howard & Montgomery Counties, District 9A

# **MDFB - Support - HB175 Income Tax Credit - Venison**

Uploaded by: Tyler Hough

Position: FAV



## Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035  
410-922-3426 | [www.mdfarmbureau.com](http://www.mdfarmbureau.com)

April 1, 2026

**To:** Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

**From:** Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

**RE:** **Support of HB175 Income Tax Credit - Venison Donation – Alterations**

On behalf of the nearly 7,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I respectfully submit this written testimony in support of HB175 – Income Tax Credit: Venison Donation – Alterations. This bill, as amended, increases the cap on the maximum income tax credit an individual may claim for expenses incurred when donating processed venison to qualifying nonprofit organizations.

Deer damage continues to be one of the most significant challenges facing Maryland farmers. In the most recent USDA wildlife damage survey, deer accounted for approximately 77 percent of all reported crop losses statewide. Based on extensive conversations with farmers across Maryland, deer damage is commonly estimated at roughly \$50 per acre. With more than 1.2 million acres of cropland in the state, total annual agricultural losses caused by deer may exceed \$60 million.

By increasing the current limitation on the tax credit available for venison donations, HB175 meaningfully expands opportunities for hunters to contribute to Maryland's anti-hunger efforts. Making the donation process more accessible and financially feasible for hunters will encourage additional deer harvests and increase the volume of donated venison available for families in need.

More importantly for our members, this bill provides an incentive that can help reduce excessive deer populations over time, offering a practical tool to address the worsening deer damage crisis affecting Maryland farms.

For these reasons, the Maryland Farm Bureau urges a favorable report on HB175.

Tyler Hough  
Director of Government Relations

*Please reach out to Tyler Hough, [though@marylandfb.org](mailto:though@marylandfb.org), with any questions*