



# Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Kevin Atticks, Secretary

Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading  
Industry

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building

50 Harry S Truman Parkway

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

mda.maryland.gov

410.841.5885 Baltimore/Washington

410.841.5846 Fax

## Maryland Department of Agriculture

### Legislative Comment

Date: February 12th, 2026

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 243  
**BILL TITLE:** Land Use - Comprehensive and General Plans - Alteration of Elements  
**MDA POSITION:** SUPPORT

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The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) respectfully submits this letter in support of *House Bill 234 - Land Use - Comprehensive and General Plans - Alteration of Elements*, a Maryland Department of Planning departmental bill that realigns comprehensive planning elements to fit the framework of the Planning Principles that were adopted in 2025.

When the Maryland Department of Planning reframed the state's Planning Principles last year, the state reaffirmed its commitment to optimizing the productivity of working landscapes, including farms and forests, and fisheries, and prioritized development within population centers that are in proximity to existing infrastructure and facilities. Agriculture continues to be Maryland's leading industry and remains a priority across agencies; House Bill 243 establishes continuity from the Planning Principles and provides the tools and framework for counties to adopt meaningful comprehensive plans.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture is supportive of the proposed updates in HB 243 and will continue to support the prioritization and protection of agricultural land in the state. For these reasons, MDA strongly supports HB 243 and respectfully requests a favorable report. MDA appreciates the consideration of the above information in the Committee's deliberations.

If you have additional questions, please contact Harrison Palmer, MDA Chief of Staff at [Harrisonb.palmer@maryland.gov](mailto:Harrisonb.palmer@maryland.gov) or (410) 980-9887.