



Maryland Farm Bureau

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February 16, 2026

To: House Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau

RE: LOI HB578 Fish and Wildlife - Endangered and Threatened Species and Migratory Birds - Regulations, Lists, Petitions, Essential Habitats, and Takings

On behalf of the 7,000 farm families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, we submit this Letter of Information regarding House Bill 578. MDFB policy supports science-based wildlife management while protecting the viability of working farms and livestock operations. Farmers across Maryland, particularly those raising cattle, sheep, goats, and other livestock, continue to experience significant losses due to black vulture predation. The federal Black Vulture Depredation Permit remains one of the only practical tools available to deter and control ongoing damage.

MDFB's primary concern is ensuring that HB 578 does not restrict, delay, or otherwise limit producers' ability to access and utilize this critical permit. Any change that complicates its use would impose direct economic harm on farm families operating on narrow margins. Consistent with MDFB policy supporting private property rights, alignment with federal standards, and the ability to defend livestock from wildlife depredation, producers must retain clear and workable authority to protect their animals and livelihoods.

We respectfully request that the Committee ensure HB 578 preserves full access to the Black Vulture Depredation Permit and remains balanced, science-based, and workable for Maryland agriculture.

Please reach out to Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio at jeannie@randrsolutions.us, with any questions.