

Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show

Bringing Our Communities Together Since 1957

Website: www.thurmontemmitsburgcommunityshow.com

February 23, 2026

VIA EMAIL TO:

Members of the Environment and
Transportation Committee

Re: Support for Maryland House Bill 972 – Maryland Fair and
Agricultural Education Promise Fund – Establishment
(Maryland Fair and Agricultural Education Promise Act)

Dear Sir or Madam:

On behalf of the Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show, I am writing to urge you to support House Bill 972, which is being proposed to increase funding for the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board. This bill provides the needed support to county fairs, agricultural exhibitions, and youth programs that are vital to the preservation and promotion of our state's rich agricultural heritage. I understand that there is a hearing on HB 972 on February 25, 2026, and am offering this letter in support at that hearing.

The Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show, which is the largest community show in the State of Maryland, will be celebrating its 70th year in 2026. Our show is a “miniature fair” (without the rides) in Frederick County. Our show highlights the many agricultural products which are grown and exhibited by members of the community and provides educational opportunities for children and adults of all ages. Also, our show has a variety of entertainment, including a martial arts show by children, a dance exhibition by a local dance studio, face painting, local musical entertainment and farm machinery exhibits. We also have activities such as a Kiddie Pedal Tractor Pull, log sawing, horseshoe pitching, a decorated animal contest, and a dairy and dairy goat show. In addition, the Catoctin FFA Alumni & Supporters hold their annual beef, sheep, swine and market goat show and sale during the show. This event has achieved great success for the 4H and FFA youth who exhibit and sell their animals. Many of these youth go on to compete at local, state and national events. We also have several food trucks available throughout the show and a local restaurant caters two meals during the show. It is important to note that our show is open to the public and we do not charge an admission fee or a parking fee.

The funds our show has received in the past years from the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board has been used to pay monetary premiums and ribbons to individuals who have won with their exhibits. Our show is completely 100% supported by volunteers - no one is paid throughout the year to make the show happen; therefore, the funding from the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board is crucial for us to continue this tradition. Of course, we could not have our show without the continued support of community businesses and individuals who support our annual baked goods auction and the Catoctin FFA Alumni & Supporters show and sale.

We also are dedicated to advancing agricultural education and hope to have more educational events and displays this year. Many youth return to the community show when they are out of school to help with the many activities during the event and help with making the show a great success.

Agricultural fairs serve as a great resource for citizens to learn about agriculture and to become better connected with their communities and provides consumers to learn about Maryland's diverse agricultural industry. They also contribute significantly to the state's economy by supporting local businesses, agritourism, and food producers. Increased funding will help us expand our impact, enhance educational exhibits and promote agriculture.

We urge you to support HB 972 to ensure that Maryland's community shows are successful in the future. If you need any further information, please contact me. We sincerely appreciate your service to the citizens of the State of Maryland and thank you for supporting these efforts.

Sincerely,

/s/ Cheryl L. Lenhart

Cheryl L. Lenhart
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***Sponsored by the Thurmont Grange, Catoctin FFA Chapter, Catoctin FFA
Alumni & Supporters,
Maryland State Grange and the Maryland Agricultural Fair Board***