



February 11, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee

Re: House Bill 395 – Water Pollution Control – Discharge Permits – Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations

Position: *Support*

Chair Korman & Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts (MASCD) I am writing to express our support for **House Bill 395 – Water Pollution Control – Discharge Permits – Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations**. MASCD, incorporated in 1956, promotes practical and effective soil, water, and natural resource related programs to all Marylanders. Through individual conservation districts MASCD provides leadership, education, cooperation, and local direction, on a voluntary basis.

HB 395 repeals the unique pre-construction permit mandate that currently applies only to new Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The bill does not weaken environmental standards; it simply aligns CAFOs with every other agricultural, commercial, and industrial activity in Maryland by allowing construction to proceed after a complete nutrient-management plan, a certified stormwater and erosion-and-sediment-control plan, and a duly noticed application for the federal National Pollutant Discharge Eliminations System (NPDES) CAFO permit have been submitted.

Our districts administer the erosion-and-sediment-control (ESC) provisions that apply to construction of CAFOs. A CAFO footprint triggers both a grading permit and a stormwater permit; both are issued only after engineering drawings, hydrologic calculations, and site inspections are completed. Between the federal prohibition on discharge and the state ESC provisions/stormwater permits, the environmental risks are already fully addressed before livestock arrive. HB 395 continues that tradition of environmental stewardship by removing an unnecessary regulatory impediment that duplicates existing safeguards and creates impediments for future livestock investment in the State of Maryland. For these reasons we respectfully request a *favorable* committee report. Thank you for your kind consideration and attention to this legislation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jen Nelson, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts