



Maryland Grain Producers Association

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Senate Bill 451 - Eminent Domain – Just Compensation – Fees and Costs

MGPA Position: **Support**

Committee: JPR

Date: February 10, 2026

The Maryland Grain Producers Association represents the farmers in Maryland who grow the nearly one million acres of corn, wheat, barley, sorghum, triticale, and soybeans across the state, contributing nearly \$1 billion in direct sales to the Maryland economy.

The Maryland Grain Producers Association (MGPA) supports Senate Bill 451 because it strengthens the principle of just compensation in eminent domain proceedings. For Maryland's grain farmers, land is not only an asset, it is the foundation of their livelihood, generational investment, and long-term economic viability.

When farmland is condemned, the loss to the farmer extends well beyond the fair market value of the acres taken. Agricultural land is part of an integrated production system. Taking even a small portion of a field can reduce yields, increase operating costs, disrupt drainage and access, and permanently diminish the productive capacity of the remaining land. These impacts directly affect farm revenue year after year, often long after the initial taking.

SB 451 recognizes that just compensation must reflect the full future financial reality faced by landowners. By ensuring that landowners are made whole for the costs necessary to secure fair valuation including legal, appraisal, and expert expenses; the bill helps prevent agricultural producers from absorbing uncompensated losses simply for asserting their constitutional right to just compensation. Without this protection, farmers may be forced to accept undervalued settlements because the cost of defending their land exceeds what their operation can absorb.

Grain farming operates on narrow margins and long planning horizons. Unlike other types of property, agricultural land cannot be easily replaced, relocated, or reconfigured once taken. Loss of acreage often means permanent loss of income and diminished farm viability for future generations. SB 451 helps ensure that when the public benefits from a taking, the individual landowner is not left to bear hidden and ongoing economic harm.

MGPA believes SB 451 promotes fairness, accountability, and respect for private property rights while maintaining the state's ability to pursue legitimate public projects. Ensuring full and fair compensation for agricultural land takings protects Maryland's farming community and the rural economy that depends on it.

For these reasons, the Maryland Grain Producers Association respectfully urges a **favorable report** on Senate Bill 451.

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