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Testimony in Support of
House Bill 909 - Sales and Use Tax - Cut Flowers – Exemption
Ways and Means Committee
February 19, 2026

The Rural Maryland Council supports **House Bill 909 - Sales and Use Tax - Cut Flowers – Exemption**. House Bill 909 provides meaningful financial support to Maryland farmers by exempting sales and use tax on cut flowers sold directly by the growers who produce them. This targeted tax relief recognizes the unique cost structure faced by small and medium-sized agricultural operations and helps strengthen the economic sustainability of local farms.

For many farmers, the costs of production extend far beyond land and equipment. Labor, inputs, transportation, and market access represent significant ongoing expenses. Flower farmers, in particular, face high upfront costs for seeds, soil amendments, climate control, harvesting, and post-harvest handling, while often operating on thin margins. Removing the sales tax on direct flower sales allows farmers to retain a greater share of their revenue and reinvest it into their operations.

Maryland already exempts certain agricultural purchases from sales and use tax in recognition of the essential role farming plays in the state's economy and food system. Extending similar consideration to cut flowers sold by farmers is consistent with this approach and supports diversification within agriculture. Encouraging locally grown floral products also benefits rural economies and promotes direct-to-consumer sales channels such as farm stands and farmers' markets.

When farm operating costs rise, those increases are frequently passed on to consumers. By easing the tax burden on flower farmers, this bill helps stabilize prices while keeping local farms competitive with large, out-of-state producers. Supporting the financial viability of farmers today is critical to ensuring that agriculture remains a viable livelihood for future generations.

The Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable support of **House Bill 909**.