



Maryland Farm Bureau

3358 Davidsonville Road | Davidsonville, MD 21035
410-922-3426 | www.mdfarmbureau.com

February 3, 2026

To: House Ways and Means Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

RE: **Support of HB359 Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property - Alterations**

On behalf of the over 7,000 member families of the Maryland Farm Bureau, I submit written testimony in support of HB359 Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property - Alterations. HB359 modifies the property tax credit eligibility for urban agricultural properties in Maryland. The bill expands the definition of urban agricultural purposes to include indoor and outdoor crop production, livestock raising, beekeeping, composting, pollinator habitat creation, agritourism, and agricultural education. It also removes the previous size restrictions (between one-eighth of an acre and five acres) and instead defines eligible properties as those not assessed as agricultural land under existing tax laws. Additionally, the bill requires counties and municipalities that grant the tax credit to evaluate its effectiveness after three years. If a jurisdiction decides to terminate the credit, it must provide at least one year's notice and allow public comment and appeal before doing so.

Urban agriculture plays a crucial role in improving food security, fostering community resilience, and enhancing environmental sustainability. By broadening the definition of urban agricultural purposes HB359 supports a holistic approach to urban farming that benefits both individuals and communities. Expanding urban agriculture offers substantial economic benefits. It supports local farmers, reduces food transportation costs, and generates employment opportunities. Additionally, community-based agriculture initiatives empower residents, strengthen local economies, and provide access to fresh, nutritious foods in areas where grocery options may be limited.

House Bill 359 is a critical measure to strengthen Maryland's commitment to urban agriculture, sustainability, and local food production. By broadening eligibility, eliminating unnecessary size restrictions, and ensuring an accountable review process, this bill supports a more resilient and equitable food system. I respectfully urge the committee to vote in favor of HB 359 to ensure that urban farmers and communities across Maryland continue to benefit from these essential agricultural incentives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', with a horizontal line above it.

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations

Please reach out to Tyler Hough, though@marylandfb.org, with any questions