

# SENATE BILL 473

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SB 311/24 – EEE & B&T

5lr1853

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By: **Senators West and Hester**

Introduced and read first time: January 22, 2025

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment and Budget and Taxation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Agriculture – Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant**  
3 **Program – Expansion**

4 FOR the purpose of expanding the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism  
5 Grant Program by making certain qualified suppliers eligible for grant funding;  
6 establishing the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Operating Fund; and  
7 generally relating to the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism  
8 Grant Program.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
10 Article – Agriculture  
11 Section 10–2101 and 10–2102  
12 Annotated Code of Maryland  
13 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

14 BY adding to  
15 Article – Agriculture  
16 Section 10–2104  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

19 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
20 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

21 **Article – Agriculture**

22 10–2101.

23 (a) In this subtitle the following words have the meanings indicated.

24 (b) “Fund” means the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 Fund.

2 (c) "MD FARM" means the Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency  
3 Mechanism Grant Program.

4 (D) "OPERATING FUND" MEANS THE MARYLAND FOOD AND  
5 AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCY OPERATING FUND.

6 (E) "QUALIFIED SUPPLIER" MEANS A BUSINESS ENTITY OR NONPROFIT  
7 ORGANIZATION THAT OPERATES A FARM OR COMMUNITY GARDEN IN THE STATE  
8 THAT:

9 (1) OPERATES ON AT LEAST 100 ACRES;

10 (2) GROWS AT LEAST 1,000,000 POUNDS OF PRODUCE ANNUALLY;  
11 AND

12 (3) DONATES AT LEAST 25% OF ITS ANNUAL HARVEST TO THE  
13 STATE'S FOOD BANKS AND CHARITABLE EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS AT NO COST.

14 10-2102.

15 (a) There is a Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant  
16 Program.

17 (b) The purpose of MD FARM is to build food system resiliency by leveraging  
18 Maryland agricultural products and services to support the State's food banks [and],  
19 charitable emergency food providers, AND QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS to alleviate food  
20 insecurity.

21 10-2104.

22 (A) (1) THERE IS A MARYLAND FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCY  
23 OPERATING FUND IN THE DEPARTMENT.

24 (2) THE PURPOSE OF THE OPERATING FUND IS TO PROVIDE GRANTS  
25 TO QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS FOR OPERATIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPLYING  
26 AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS TO THE STATE'S FOOD BANKS AND CHARITABLE  
27 EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS.

28 (B) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ADMINISTER THE OPERATING FUND.

29 (C) (1) THE OPERATING FUND IS A SPECIAL, NONLAPSING FUND THAT IS  
30 NOT SUBJECT TO § 7-302 OF THE STATE FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT ARTICLE.

1           **(2) THE STATE TREASURER SHALL HOLD THE OPERATING FUND**  
2 **SEPARATELY, AND THE COMPTROLLER SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE OPERATING**  
3 **FUND.**

4           **(D) THE OPERATING FUND CONSISTS OF:**

5                 **(1) MONEY APPROPRIATED IN THE STATE BUDGET TO THE**  
6 **OPERATING FUND; AND**

7                 **(2) ANY OTHER MONEY FROM ANY OTHER SOURCE ACCEPTED FOR**  
8 **THE BENEFIT OF THE OPERATING FUND.**

9           **(E) THE OPERATING FUND SHALL BE USED TO PROVIDE GRANTS TO**  
10 **QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS FOR OPERATIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPLYING**  
11 **AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTS TO THE STATE'S FOOD BANKS AND CHARITABLE**  
12 **EMERGENCY FOOD PROVIDERS.**

13           **(F) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2027 AND EACH FISCAL YEAR THEREAFTER, THE**  
14 **GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF**  
15 **\$1,000,000 TO THE OPERATING FUND.**

16           SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
17 1, 2025.