



Maryland Grain Producers Association  
123 Clay Drive, Queenstown, MD 21658  
Lindsay.mdag@gmail.com (p) 443-262-8491  
www.marylandgrain.com

Date: March 2, 2021

House Bill 1282 Real Property – Nuisance Actions – Rodent Harborage

Committee: Environment & Transportation

MGPA Position: **OPPOSED**

The Maryland Grain Producers Association serves as the voice of grain farmers growing corn, wheat, barley and sorghum across the state. On an annual basis, nearly a million acres of these crops are grown in Maryland.

House Bill 12882 would authorize an individual to bring a nuisance action for damages caused by rodent harborage on real property against an owner of the property. It defines "rodent harborage" as a condition that provides sustenance or shelter for rodents, promotes their reproduction and continued existence on a property, creates or contributes to property damage, is injurious to public health and safety or obstructs the reasonable use of the property. The bill authorizes the court to award compensatory and punitive damages to a prevailing plaintiff.

MGPA is concerned this bill could be used to bring about nuisance suits against farmers who have rats living in their fields or barns. Farmers do what they can to control these populations as they are undesirable to the farmer as well but it is much harder to rid fields and outbuildings of rodents than it is homes that are regularly inhabited.

MGPA respectfully asks for an UNFAVORABLE report on House Bill 1282 but would remove our opposition if an exemption for agricultural property were included.