



3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

January 25, 2022

To: Senate Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of SB 39 - Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Returning to State Meat Processing Inspection (Farms Buy Local Act)**

On behalf of our Farm Bureau member families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 39, legislation that establishes a Task Force to Study the Feasibility of Returning to a State Meat Processing Inspection program instead of relying on the USDA to provide the services. Maryland used to have a state meat processing inspection program. However, it was removed in the early 1990's.

Over the years, local processors have had increasing issues with the USDA program culminating with some significant changes to the way they were inspected last year. Most of our neighboring states have state meat processing inspection programs. With a large movement to source more local grown food, the need for additional meat processing is at its highest level in decades. Moving back to a state program, would bring a more streamlined approach to the process and help processors stay in compliance as well as start up faster.

**MDFB Policy:**

We encourage the State and USDA to streamline the process to expedite new and expand existing custom butcher shops and livestock processing facilities.

We support the reinstatement of the State inspection program for local livestock processing facilities to support direct sale to consumers.

**MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 39 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Colby Ferguson".

Colby Ferguson  
Director of Government Relations

*For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396*