

Support of SB 489 - Queen Anne's County - Public S

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Position: FAV



Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

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

February 8, 2022

To: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: Support of SB489 – Queen Anne's County - Public Safety - Buildings Used for Agritourism

On behalf of our member families, I submit this written testimony in support of SB489. This is legislation that adds Queen Anne's County to a list of other counties that exempt existing ag structures that are going to be used for agritourism from being required to retrofit the structure with bathrooms, sprinklers and other high occupancy requirements. This exemption allows up to 200 people in the structure. The structure must still adhere to the structural integrity standards as well as entrance and exit requirements.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: Agritourism should be defined as activities conducted on a farm and offered to the public or to invited groups for the purpose of education, recreation, or active involvement in the farm operation.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 489 AND ENCOURAGES 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

SB489_FAV_AtticksGrowFortify.pdf

Uploaded by: Kevin Atticks

Position: FAV



Bill #	SB489
Position	SUPPORT

February 8, 2022

Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
11 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair and Members of the Committee—

With local the farms facing declining revenues and development pressure, we must take innovative—yet reasonable—actions to provide new opportunities for growth and prosperity.

Agritourism is a primary means of providing new revenue opportunities for our farms.

The most endearing and practical structures on a farm are typically original barns. In many parts of the state, these barns are transformed into beautiful tasting rooms, farm markets and hosts to various agritourism operations. In many counties, these barns are exempted from specific onerous and prohibitively expensive building code requirements. *In these counties, agritourism operations are flourishing.*

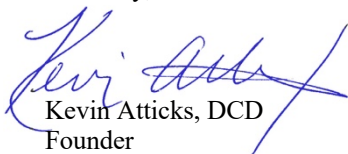
We urge your support for SB489, which **adds Queen Anne’s County** to the list of jurisdictions in which farm structures used for agritourism activities with an occupancy under 200 are exempted from certain requirements generally applied to commercial buildings.

Our commendations to the sponsor and county for their vision in supporting rural agricultural entrepreneurs.

With your support, Queen Anne’s County can develop a thriving agritourism industry, which will not only support farms, but also the broader communities in which they reside.

We urge your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,



Kevin Atticks, DCD
Founder

*Cultivating an environment where value-added agricultural producers,
startups, operators and growers innovate and thrive.*

SB489 Testimony.QAC Agritourism_FAV.pdf

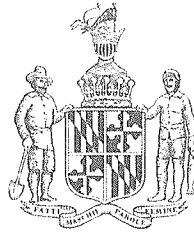
Uploaded by: Steve Hershey

Position: FAV

STEPHEN S. HERSHEY, JR.
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
Queen Anne's Counties

Finance Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee



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11 Bladen Street, Room 320
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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 4, 2022

The Honorable Paul Pinsky
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Bill 489 – Queen Anne's County – Public Safety – Buildings Used For Agritourism

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 489 is a local bill that add Queen Anne's County to the list of counties where an existing agricultural building used for agritourism for up to 200 people in occupancy.

Senate Bill 489 is supported by the Queen Anne's County Commissioners, the Queen Anne's County Delegation and the Maryland Farm Bureau.

I request a favorable vote on Senate Bill 489.



Queen
Anne's
County

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
Stephen Wilson, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Christopher M. Corchiarino, District 4

**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY**

The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

e-mail: QACCommissioners@Administrator@qac.org

County Administrator: Todd R. Mohn, PE

Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners: Margie A. Houck

County Attorney: Patrick Thompson, Esquire

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Senator Paul G. Pinsky
Chairman, Education, Health & Environmental Affairs
Committee 2 West Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB489- Queen Anne's County-Public Safety- Buildings Used for Agritourism

SUPPORT

Dear Senator Pinsky:

Please consider this letter of support for SB489. This bill adds Queen Anne's County to the list of counties where an existing agricultural building used for agritourism for up to 200 persons is not considered a change of occupancy that requires a building permit. This is a change from the 50-person capacity currently in place.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this legislation.

Respectfully,

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Christopher M. Corchiarino, President

James J. Moran

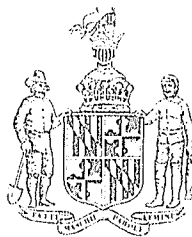
Stephen Wilson

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STEPHEN S. HERSHEY, JR.
Legislative District 36
Caroline, Cecil, Kent, and
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—
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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 8th, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairman Pinsky,

The Queen Anne's County Senate Delegation supports **Senate Bill 489- Queen Anne's County-Public Safety-Buildings Used for Agritourism**. I thank you for your committee's consideration of this bill and request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Hershey, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Senator Stephen S. Hershey, Jr.

MDA - SB 489 - Letter of Information.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Cassie Shirk

Position: INFO



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading Industry

Office of the Secretary

Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Joseph Bartenfelder, Secretary
Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building
50 Harry S Truman Parkway
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
mda.maryland.gov

410.841.5880 Baltimore/Washington
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Maryland Department of Agriculture

Legislative Comment

Date: February 8, 2022

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 489

SHORT TITLE: Queen Anne's County - Public Safety - Buildings Used for Agritourism

MDA POSITION: Information

EXPLANATION:

SB 489 exempts an agricultural building in Queen Anne's County used for agritourism from (1) adhering to the Maryland Building Performance Standards (MBPS) and (2) obtaining a change of occupancy permit if (1) the building's use for agritourism does not require it to be occupied by more than 200 people at any one time and (2) the width of egress for the building meets specified building code standards.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) works to support the sustainable, economic success of Maryland farmers. In a state with many consumers who have the resources to spend on recreation, agritourism presents a viable opportunity to diversify farm operations. Agritourism supports the preservation of farm-based amenities, fits well with state and local goals of maintaining and preserving open space, and helps counties retain cultural, historic values.

The last agricultural census completed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service in 2017 indicated there were 295 agritourism farms in Maryland, with revenues of nearly \$10 million.

In 2018, the General Assembly passed legislation allowing counties the opportunity to adopt a statewide definition of agritourism in zoning and/or other ordinances. Governor Hogan signed Chapter 672 of 2018 (House Bill 252) into law in May 2018. This law defines "agritourism" as an activity conducted on a farm that is offered to a member of the general public or to invited guests for the purpose of education, recreation, or active involvement in the farm operation. This includes farm tours, hayrides, corn mazes, seasonal petting farms, farm museums, guest farms, pumpkin patches, "pick your own" or "cut your own" produce, classes related to agricultural

products or skills, and picnic and party facilities offered in conjunction with any agritourism activity.

If you have additional questions, please contact Cassie Shirk, Director of Legislation and Governmental Affairs, at cassie.shirk@maryland.gov or 410-841-5886.