



Maryland Farm Bureau

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January 22, 2024

To: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau

Re: **Information Only – SB0311 - Agriculture - Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant Program – Expansion**

The Maryland Food and Agricultural Resiliency Mechanism Grant Program (MFARM) helps people who are food insecure to access the nourishment that they need, while providing a market for farmers to sell their products. The purpose of this program is to build food system resiliency by leveraging Maryland agricultural/seafood products and services to support the State's food banks and charitable emergency food providers to alleviate food insecurity.

The grant program allows Maryland's food banks and charitable emergency food providers to request funding to purchase and process surplus, seasonal, or contractual agricultural/seafood products listed in the Certified Local Farm and Fish Program and deliver it to Maryland families in need throughout the year.

Maryland Farm Bureau worked for the MFARM Program establishment in 2022 and is happy to see an opportunity to expand the grant program. We believe the current language for eligibility of “Qualified Nonprofit Organizations” is limiting to the operations that would qualify. We believe that less restrictive eligibility requirements would be beneficial to the grant program, and to the many charitable operations that donate to the Maryland Food Bank under the MFARM program to alleviate food insecurity.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tyler Hough', written over a horizontal line.

Tyler Hough
Director of Government Relations

Please reach out to Tyler Hough at 443-878-4045 with any questions