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#1 January 17, 2019

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis - Wednesday, January 30

8:30 AM - Briefing for farmers at the Calvert House, 58 State Circle, Annapolis

9:30 AM - Breakfast with legislators

12:00 PM - Governor Hogan delivers State of the State Address

Farm Bureau members must register by January 22, 2019.

All members of the Maryland General Assembly are invited to attend.

Welcome to the first *Hotline* of the 2019 Maryland General Assembly session. The *Hotline* will be sent to you each week during the session to make you aware of upcoming hearings for bills that will impact Maryland's farm community. We will ask Farm Bureau members to "take action" on proposed legislation to ensure the preservation and protection of Maryland agriculture. The *Hotline* is distributed to more than 6,000 farmers across the state and to all 188 members of the Maryland General Assembly.

Colby Ferguson, Parker Welch and Valerie Connelly will staff Maryland Farm Bureau's Annapolis office. The office is located on the 2nd floor at 68 State Circle on the corner of Maryland Avenue. The best time to reach us is during the morning hours. If we are out at a hearing or attending another meeting, you may text, email, or leave a voicemail message and we will get back to you as soon as possible. You can reach Colby on his cell phone at (240) 578-0396 or by email at cferguson@mdfarmbureau.com. Valerie can be reached on her cell phone at (443) 690-2411 or by email at vconnelly@mdfarmbureau.com. You can reach Parker on his cell phone at (443) 480-4059 or by email at pwelch@mdfarmbureau.com

The *Hotline* descriptions will include the title of the bill, our summary and MFB's position. Our positions are based on policy adopted by grassroots members at our annual convention. You can view the text of the bill and the MGA fiscal analysis by clicking on the hyperlink associated with the bill number and selecting the

“documents” tab. Please keep in mind that the positions taken in each *Hotline* by the Maryland Farm Bureau are based on the information available on the bill at the time of publication. Our position may change if the bill is amended after publication.

The *Hotline* will be posted on the MFB website each week at www.mdfarmbureau.com/our-voice. The Maryland General Assembly’s website can also serve as a valuable tool for legislative information. The site offers the proceedings and agendas of the House and Senate, hearing schedules, bill information and status, and other data updated nightly. You may also obtain contact information (phone & email) for your legislators at this site: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frm1st.aspx?tab=home>.

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

SB0025 - Real Property - Conservation Easements, Covenants, Restrictions, and Conditions - Recording Notice

Chair of Judicial Proceedings Committee on Behalf of the Administration, JPR at 1:00pm in 2 East Miller

This bill authorizes the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation, the Maryland Historical Trust, the Maryland Environmental Trust, and the Department of Natural Resources to record notice of easements, covenants, restrictions, and conditions in the land records of the county in which the property interest is located.

As conservation easements become older and older on properties, there are times when real property searches miss these easements when a prospective buyer is looking to purchase the property where the easement is located. This bill would allow the agencies to add these easements to the land records so these easements will be noticed at the time of property searches.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 25

SB0056 - Secretary of Agriculture - Regulation of Poultry to Protect Animal Health and Control Avian Influenza

Chair of Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee on Behalf of Maryland Department of Agriculture, EHEA at 4:00pm in 2 West Miller

This Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) bill further defines and clarifies a live poultry market and a poultry dealer in Maryland. The bill adds to the definition of live poultry market as a facility **or a location** where poultry is slaughtered & sold on-site **and is offered for sale, sold, distributed or transferred**. It also amends the definition of a poultry dealer to a person that engages in the business of buying, selling, exchanging, or transporting poultry. This language is being added to ensure MDA has the ability to properly implement an animal health protection program for poultry in the state. This will help ensure all types of poultry operations are included to make sure poultry farms large and small are properly protected from potential disease outbreaks such as Avian Influenza.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 56

SB0057 - Agriculture - County Agricultural Land Preservation Programs

Chair of Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee on Behalf of Maryland Department of Agriculture, EHEA at 4:00pm in 2 West Miller

This Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) bill is to clarify language in the Agriculture article that was enacted with HB 620 during the 2018 legislative session, but was only included in the Land Use article. HB 620 that was enacted into law last year had two parts. First it extends the timeframe for when a county Ag land preservation program is required to recertify its program with the State from every 3 years to every 5 years. Part two of the bill extends the time that a county program can retain its unused land preservation funds from 3 years to 6 years. This is very helpful since MALPF has used an every other year easement acquisition protocol for several years now. Under current law, the county has to send back any unused funds every 3 years. Because of every other year acquisition cycle, this could result in counties sending back significant amounts of fund just because the state didn't have an acquisition cycle that third year. This extension would allow a county to more effectively use their allocated land preservation funds and preserve more farmland in their county. Since this bill is just enacting the same language we supported in 2018, we support this as well.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 57

SB0058 - Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation - Elimination of District Agreements

Chair of Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee on Behalf of Maryland Department of Agriculture, EHEA at 4:00pm in 2 West Miller

This Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) bill just deletes obsolete references to district agreements within the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation program and codifies the elimination of these district agreements and the continuation of agricultural land preservation districts in which an easement has been transferred to the Foundation and districts which provide a property tax credit to a landowner. Since this is just clean-up language and no Ag land owner is going to be removed from participating in the MALPF easement program or would have to pay higher taxes, Maryland Farm Bureau supports this bill.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 58

Thursday, January 24, 2019

State of Agriculture Briefing

E&T at 1:00pm in 250 HOB

Maryland Farm Bureau, along with Maryland Grain Producers, Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc., Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, and MidAtlantic Farm Credit will be briefing the House Environment & Transportation Committee on the state of agriculture in Maryland.

Maryland Farm Bureau members are urged to contact their legislators and members of the relevant committees in support of Farm Bureau's positions on the bills listed above. To contact legislators, log on to the Maryland General Assembly website at: <http://mgaleg.maryland.gov> and select the "Legislators" Tab at the top.

Committees & Room Numbers:

Senate: Budget & Taxation (B&T), 3 West Miller; Education, Health & Environmental Affairs (EHEA), 2 West Miller; Finance (FIN), 3 East Miller; Judicial Proceedings (JPR), 2 East Miller

House: Appropriations (APP), 120 HOB; Economic Matters (ECM), 230 HOB; Environmental & Transportation (E&T), 250 HOB; Health & Government Operations (HGO), 240 HOB; Judiciary (JUD), 100 HOB; Ways & Means (W&M) 130 HOB

In Other Ag News

Some FSA Offices Open on Thursday, Friday and Monday

The Agriculture Department has announced a limited opening of a select number of county Farm Service Agency offices for three days only for limited services related to select farm operating and farm ownership loans, and to work on processing 1099s related to these loans. The dates are Thursday and Friday (Jan. 17-18) and Tuesday, Jan. 22. In Maryland, offices will be open in Frederick and Denton only.

2018 Annual Implementation Reporting Forms to Be Mailed, Available Online

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has announced that the 2018 Annual Implementation Reporting Forms and instructions will be mailed in early January to approximately 5,500 Maryland farmers who are regulated under the department's Nutrient Management Program. These farmers are required to follow nutrient management plans when fertilizing crops and managing animal manure. The forms are due March 1 and will be used to fully account for everything that Maryland farmers are doing to protect water quality in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and its tributaries. Check your mailboxes for the reporting forms. For more information, contact your regional nutrient management office.

Food Safety Training for FSMA Produce Safety Rule Compliance

Interested in learning about produce safety? Join the St. Mary's County Extension for their food safety training on Monday, February 11th from 8:00am - 5:00pm. The office is located at 26737 Radio Station Way, Leonardtown MD, 20650. Contact Deanna Baldwin, deanna.baldwin@maryland.gov or Sarah Everhart, severhart@law.umaryland.edu with questions.