



www.mdfarmbureau.com | Contact: [Colby Ferguson](#) or [Parker Welch](#)



#3: February 7, 2020

Dates to Remember:

Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis | Wednesday, February 12

- 8:30 AM - Legislative briefing at the Calvert House, 58 State Circle
- 10:00 AM - Sit in on Senate or House sessions or make office visits
- 11:45 AM - Lunch with legislators
- 1:00 PM - Sit in on committee hearings or make office visit



Welcome to our third Hotline of the 2020 Maryland General Assembly session. This week in Annapolis has been hectic due to bill introduction deadlines in both the House and the Senate. MFB testified on a few bills including sports betting, crimes against animals, gun laws and meat labeling. Next week looks to be the week committee hearings get into full swing with a mad dash to get all the bills heard and discussed before the bill crossover deadline of March 16th. We encourage any members interested in submitting testimony or coming to testify on any bills next week to contact us and we will help with that process. With six priority bills being heard next Wednesday on Maryland Farm Bureau's Day in Annapolis, this will serve as a great opportunity for our members to testify or watch in person! Stay in touch and follow important bills by checking out our new [action center](#).

The following bills will be heard next week:

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

[SB281](#) - Renewable Energy Development & Siting - Evaluations & Tax & Fee Exemptions
Senator Ferguson, EHEA at 1:00 PM in 2 West Miller

This bill would allow the Maryland Department of the Environment to waive the fees and requirements for remediation of brownfields, landfills and other contaminated properties if clean or renewable electrical generation sites are being created as long as they are not causing a disturbance to the soil that could cause a negative environmental impact.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We encourage that brownfields, and urban areas be utilized to assist with the clean energy mandate in lieu of prime and productive farmland.

Maryland Farm Bureau Supports SB 281

[SB295](#) - Agriculture - Cost-Sharing Program - Sale of Harvested Cover Crops
Senator Hough, EHEA at 1:00 PM in 2 West Miller

The bill authorizes a person that plants rye or two-row barley cover crops as a best management practice to sell the harvested cover crop to a malting facility in the state or to a person that will process the cover crop for sale in the state. The bill doesn't designate an amount of subsidy that would be paid for the practice.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: All cover crop acreage should be fully funded. Participants should be allowed to determine in the spring, which fields will be harvested, and which fields will be destroyed under the program.

For Information Only

[SB300](#) - Pesticides - Use of Chlorpyrifos - Prohibition
Senator Lam, EHEA at 1:00 PM in 2 West Miller

This bill bans the use of Chlorpyrifos in Maryland starting October 1, 2020. This includes

insecticides that include Chlorpyrifos and seeds treated with Chlorpyrifos.

Chlorpyrifos is sometimes used on non-GMO corn, but since there isn't much non-GMO corn grown in Maryland, one of the main uses in Maryland is in orchards. They use it only once a year either post-harvest or during the tree's dormant stage. Most contract vegetable growers are required to use seeds treated with Chlorpyrifos as well. In vineyards, Chlorpyrifos is the only treatment against the Spotted Lanternfly.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: Farmers should not be held liable for any environmental residues or water contaminated by a farm chemical if the chemical was federally approved and used according to label instructions. Furthermore, we believe the use of pesticides should be regulated by available facts, not on emotional issues. We urge keeping all federally labeled crop protection products legal in the state, counties and municipalities.

Maryland Farm Bureau Opposes SB 300

[SB342](#) - Aquaculture - Leases in Water Column - Riparian Right of First Refusal
Senator Bailey, EHEA at 1:00 PM in 2 West Miller

This bill establishes that a riparian property owner or lessee shall have the right of first refusal to apply for and, if approved, obtain a water column lease, or an aquaculture lease for use in the water column in an Aquaculture Enterprise Zone and in an area that fronts the riparian property. The "actively work the lease" state requirement would not apply to a riparian property owner that exercises their right of first refusal and obtains the aquaculture lease.

This bill severely limits the ability for oyster aquaculture farmers to acquire aquaculture leases in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The process to apply for and be approved for an aquaculture lease is already an extensive process that can take multiple years to complete. However, allowing a landowner that has shoreline frontage to open any and available aquaculture leases to have the right of first refusal to lease up these areas could eliminate the opportunities for new aquaculture leases that would actually be worked and produce oysters while cleaning up the bay.

This type of legislation could set a precedent and set up the next type of legislation that would allow a landowner adjacent to a farm for rent to get the right of first refusal to rent the ground and not farm it.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: Restrictions and policies implemented by DNR relating to the management of wild aquatic resources shall not infringe in any manner on aquaculture activities.

Maryland Farm Bureau Opposes SB 342

HB209 - Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act
Delegate Lierman, E&T at 1:00 PM in 250 HOB

This bill prohibits a store from distributing plastic carryout bags to a customer at the point of sale and requires a store to charge and collect at least 10 cents if the store provides a customer a durable carryout bag. There bills also establishes a Single-Use Products Workgroup; requiring the workgroup to study and make recommendations regarding single-use products; etc.

Amendment: Maryland Farm Bureau is asking to amend the definition of a plastic carryout bag in the bill to allow retail stores the option to use biodegradable plastic bags.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We recommend Maryland replace consumer plastic bags with biodegradable plastic bags.

Maryland Farm Bureau Supports HB 209 with an Amendment

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

HB100 - Maryland Agricultural Commission - Hemp Industry Member
Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo, E&T at 1:00 PM in 250 HOB

This bill increases the membership of the Maryland Agricultural Commission to include a member representing the hemp industry.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We support the right of Maryland farmers to grow hemp as an agricultural crop.

Maryland Farm Bureau Supports HB 100

HB156 - Agriculture - Cost-Sharing Program - Sale of Harvested Cover Crops
Delegate Kerr, E&T at 1:00 PM in 250 HOB

See bill summary for SB 295 that's being heard on Tuesday.

For Information Only

HB210 - Aquaculture - Leases in Water Column - Riparian Right of First Refusal
Delegate Crosby, E&T at 1:00 PM in 250 HOB

See bill summary for SB 342 that's being heard on Tuesday.

Maryland Farm Bureau Opposes HB 210

[HB222](#) - Income Tax Rates - Capital Gains Income
Delegate Palakovich Carr, W&M at 1:00 PM in 130 HOB

This bill would increase an individual's income tax rate by an additional 1% on net capital gains and would apply starting 2020 taxable year. This would include the net capital gains from the sale of a land preservation easement. Farmers already take a discount on the value of their easement. For several years now, MFB has asked for the net capital gains from the sale of easements to be exempted from a farmer's income tax. This bill does not address the farmer issue and compounds it by increasing the tax, further devaluing their land.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We support an exemption from the Maryland capital gains tax on any profit realized from the sale of a perpetual conservation easement.

Maryland Farm Bureau Opposes HB 222

[HB229](#) - Pesticides - Use of Chlorpyrifos - Prohibition
Delegate Stein, E&T at 1:00 PM in 250 HOB

See bill summary for SB 300 that's being heard on Tuesday.

Maryland Farm Bureau Opposes HB 229

[HB256](#) - Maryland Estate Tax - Unified Credit
Delegate Wilkins, W&M at 1:00 PM in 130 HOB

This bill alters the limit on the unified credit used for determining the Maryland estate tax for decedents dying on or after July 1, 2020, to not exceed \$1,000,000; and altering a certain limitation on the amount of the Maryland estate tax for decedents dying on or after July 1, 2020, to not exceed \$1,000,000.

This bill does not alter the subsection in the law that pertains to agriculture so the limit remains at \$5,000,000 for farms.

For Information Only

Thursday, February 13, 2020

[SB505](#) - Crimes Against Animals - Interference With Equines
Senator Hough, JUD at 12:00 PM in 100 HOB

This bill expands the scope of current law that prohibits the interfering with, injuring, tampering with, or destroying a horse used for racing or breeding or for a competitive exhibition of skill, breed, or stamina by including all horses. A person who violates this

section of current law is guilty of a felony and on conviction is subject to imprisonment of not less than 1 year and not exceeding 3 years.

There have been several instances over the last few years where farmers and horse owners have had people interfere with their animals and cause undue harm and potential injury. Many cases have been around horse carriage rides and at county fairs. This bill would add these horses to current state law that prohibits someone from doing these acts of violence.

Amendment: Since this bill only expands to all horses instead of including the other livestock, MFB is asking for an amendment to include all livestock.

Maryland Farm Bureau Policy: We oppose animal rights activism that disrupts farming operations, ag related activities on and off the farm, fairs, racetracks, livestock sales or research facilities.

Maryland Farm Bureau Supports SB 505 with an Amendment

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 and follow important bills, visit Maryland Farm Bureau's [action center](#) and select key legislation.

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; Environment & 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

Sign-ups for Farm Bill Safety Net Programs Open

Contact your local FSA office now to enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, two popular safety net programs, for 2019 and 2020 crop year. The deadline for 2019 signup is Monday, March 16 and the 2020 deadline is Tuesday, June 30. All participating farms need to be enrolled no later than these dates. [Sign up today!](#)



Department Breaks Ground for New Animal Health Lab



The Maryland Department of Agriculture hosted a groundbreaking ceremony this morning at the site of its new Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory in Salisbury. The new Salisbury Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory will replace the department's original lab, which was built in 1953, and is in need of major renovations. [Read more here.](#)

Trucking Forums Offered

Maryland Farm Bureau has trucking forums scheduled for Frederick and Wye Mills. All Maryland Farm Bureau members, farmers, and truck drivers are invited to this forum to discuss the issues facing farmers on rural roads and state highways. [Register here.](#)



Five MFB Scholarships Available

Maryland Farm Bureau is giving away \$10,000 in scholarships to students. Applications are due February 10, 2020. [Apply today!](#)

Sign-Ups for Young Farmers and Ranchers Conference 2020

You won't want to miss the AFBF 2020 YF&R Leadership Conference! There will be great speakers, breakout sessions and evening events to bring together Young Farmers & Ranchers volunteer leaders from across the United States. [Register today!](#)



John Deere Member Benefit

Use your Maryland Farm Bureau membership to receive access to the John Deere Rewards program and apply Platinum 2 discounts to your purchase. Learn more and sign up [here.](#) You can create your account by using your Maryland Farm Bureau membership number or by visiting a dealership.