



Annual Agriculture Legislative Day

February 12, 2022 – Saturday, February 12, 2022, Frederick County Farm Bureau, Catoctin and Frederick Soil Conservation Districts and Frederick County Pomona Grange hosted their annual legislative day for Frederick County’s congressional representatives, state delegation, county government and the Frederick County school board.

The day started bright and early at 9:00 AM with staffers from the congressional representatives. In attendance was Nan Mann with Senator Chris Van Hollen and Kathleen Connor from Representative Jamie Raskin’s office. We discussed topics including immigration reform, inheritance tax, increased inflation, the price of nitrogen and the upcoming farm bill.

David Burrier, farmer from Union Bridge, provided figures on the sharp increase in ag inputs for the current planting season and was expressed concern that agriculture has not been under this kind of stress since the 80’s when interest rates were 17%.

Around 10:45 AM, the Frederick County state delegation joined us. In attendance were Senator Michael Hough, Delegate Ken Kerr, Delegate Dan Cox, and Delegate Karen Lewis-Young. This session included discussion about many agricultural bills that we support and oppose in Maryland General Assembly. One topic we discussed specifically was our support for a bill as it would add camping and incidental outdoor stays to the state definition of agritourism. Right before lunch we had remarks from Sheriff Chuck Jenkins.

Finally, we ended the afternoon with our county government and Frederick County school board. In attendance from the county government was County Executive Jan Gardner, County Council President M.C. Keegan-Ayer, Council Vice President Michael Blue, Councilmember Jerry Donald, Councilmember Jessica Fitzwater, Councilmember Kai Hagen, and Councilmember Steve McKay. In attendance from the school board was Vice-President Sue Johnson.

During this session we discussed topics about working toward an agreement with MDE to host another agriculture tire recycling program. Presentations were made summarizing the county’s progress toward ag preservation and the new Innovative Grants program. We encouraged continued support to provide funding for ag preservation of prime conservation land through the variety of preservation programs available to help facilitate the transfer of productive farms to the next generation. We discussed the Sabillasville environmental school with the board of education and we urged the board of education to include agriculture in middle schools.

Denny Remsburg, said, “Legislative Day provides members of our sponsoring organizations, to develop a relationship with our congressional representatives, state delegation, and county government so we can communicate concerns that are affecting us as agriculture. We can provide insight into our positions on pending legislation, positive or negative. It’s important that we continue to provide a voice for agriculture to our legislative representatives.”.