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#9 March 19, 2021

Welcome to Hotline 9. This week we saw most of the days filled with subcommittee, committee and floor voting sessions. The last remaining bills were heard as well. Because of Monday's bill crossover deadline, the committees have spent long days plowing through their bills. Starting next week, the committees will begin hearing the bills that successfully passed their house of origin. Because of this, the scheduling of those hearings will be much quicker. Therefore, this will be the last weekly Hotline of this year's session. We will put together a final Hotline after the session is over to show the results of our priority bills. For this week's Hotline, we have decided to give some updates to bills that have either passed out, killed in committee or withdrawn.

Bill Updates

Agricultural Policy:

HB 84: Consumer Protection - Right to Repair
Delegate Feldmark

This bill was killed in committee. There is strong legislative interest in assisting the farmers with their right-to-repair issues, but this bill did significantly more than the farm equipment. I recommend this be a MDFB Issue of Concern for 2021 policy development and if supported, a bill should be introduced in the 2022 legislative session to specifically target farm equipment.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 84

HB 249: Agriculture – License to Produce Hemp – Limitation
Delegate Cardin

This bill was withdrawn by the sponsor.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OPPOSES HB 249

HB 269: Department of Agriculture - Urban Agriculture Grant Program
Delegate Wells

This bill passed out of the house and was amended to remove the funding mandate. We still support the bill as amended.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 269

HB 752: Income Tax Credit - Food Donation Pilot Program - Extension
Delegate Ebersole

This bill passed out of the house.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 752

HB 801: Calvert County – Public Safety – Buildings Used for Agritourism
Delegate Clark

This bill has passed the house.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 801

SB 51: Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland - Property Management -
Southern Maryland Regional Agricultural Center
Senator Bailey

This bill has passed the senate.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 51

SB 344: Agriculture - Cost-Sharing Program - State Cost-Sharing Funds
Senator Pinsky on behalf of Maryland Department of Agriculture

This bill passed the senate with an amendment to include a 5-year sunset.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 344

Aquaculture:

HB 145: Unlawful Taking of Oysters From Submerged Land Leases, Aquaculture Leases, and Water Column Leases – Penalties
Delegate Boyce

This bill was killed in committee and was flawed from the start. It didn't address the concerns of the commercial fishermen, and they pushed hard to kill the bill. DNR's data showed that there are very few (only 2) aquaculture thefts in the last 5 years. So the committee didn't want to wait on this bill to be fixed, so they moved unfavorable. If the issues are addressed in the future, it will need a more coordinated approach where both aquaculture farmers and commercial fishermen sit down and draft the major components of the bill.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 145

HB 800: Aquaculture Leases - Marking and Recording Requirements - Mobile Application
Delegate Clark

This bill passed the house as amended. We still support the bill as amended.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 800

Energy:

HB 569: Electricity - Net Energy Metering - Limit
Delegate Clippinger

This bill passed the house.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 569

SB 407: Electricity – Net Energy Metering – Limit
Senator Kramer

This bill passed the senate.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 407

Environmental Protection:

HB 8: Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Fund - Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative - Use of Proceeds for Maryland Healthy Soils Program
Delegate Krimm

This bill was withdrawn by the sponsor. However, SB414 - Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021 has passed the Senate and includes the \$500,000 for Healthy Soils in it. The senate bill will most likely be the pathway for this funding if passed this session.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 8

HB 33: Climate Crisis and Education Act
Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo

This bill was killed in committee.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OPPOSES HB 33

HB 472: Agriculture - Use of Glyphosate - Prohibition
Delegate P. Young

This bill was withdrawn by the sponsor.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OPPOSES HB 472

HB 507: Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021
Delegate Stein

This bill has passed the house as amended. We support the amended bill.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 507

HB 577: Health and Welfare of H-2 Visa and Migrant Workers – COVID-19
Pandemic – Regulations (Healthy Farmworkers Act)
Delegate Stewart

This bill was killed in committee.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OPPOSES HB 577

HB 991: Natural Resources – Forest Mitigation Banks – Qualified Preservation
Delegate Gilchrist

This bill passed as amended. We support the bill as amended.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 991

SB 119: Clean Water Commerce Act of 2021
Senator Guzzone

This bill passed the senate with the amendments we supported.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 119

Hunting/Wildlife & Natural Resources:

HB 594: Prohibition on Sale of Wildlife - Local Venison Donation Programs - Application
Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo

This bill was withdrawn by the sponsor, but there will be a summer discussion on ways to address the overpopulation of deer.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 594

Labor:

HB 581: Labor and Employment - Employment Standards During an Emergency (Maryland Essential Workers' Protection Act)
Delegate D.E. Davis

This bill is still in committee and is being significantly amended. We offered amendments to exclude agriculture from the bill.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU OPPOSES HB 581

HB 841: Labor and Employment - Maryland Wage and Hour Law - Agricultural Stands, Retail Farms, and Farmers' Markets
Delegate Otto

This bill was killed in committee.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 841

Land Preservation:

HB 860: State Planning – Preservation of Agricultural Land – Goal
Delegate Gilchrist

This bill passed the house amended to include the Next Gen. program.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 860

Tax Policy & Budget:

HB 497: Property Tax Credit - Urban Agricultural Property - Repeal of
Repayment Requirement
Delegate Boyce

This bill passed the house.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS HB 497

SB 539: Income Tax Credit – Food Donation Pilot Program – Extension
Senator Guzzone

This bill passed the senate.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 539

In Other Ag News

Dairy Organization Announces Farm Beautification Award Program

The Maryland Dairy Industry Association will once again honor farms across the state as part of a statewide dairy farm beautification program. This is the 13th year for the Maryland Dairy of Distinction program. So far, 41 dairy farms received the honor. All Maryland dairy producers are invited to submit a [application](#) for the award by April 15th. [More here.](#)



MWA's Commercial Vineyard Expansion Course Launches

Maryland wineries are seeking high-quality Maryland-grown fruit, but it's in short supply. Growers have struggled to stay afloat, often unable to reach an economy of scale. Available online, this 9-lesson course by viticulturist Joyce Rigby will guide participants through the vineyard startup and expansion process from a professional perspective—and with financial modeling in mind. [More here.](#)

Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Now Accepting Applications for FY22 Easement Cycle

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) is now accepting easement applications for the FY22 cycle. Eligible Maryland farmers who are interested in preserving their land as an agricultural easement should apply with their county preservation program office as soon as possible. [More here.](#)
