

Testimony CB6-2018  
Modifications to the Ho Co Agricultural Land Preservation Act  
and Associated Reorganization  
September 17, 2018

Position: For

I would like to thank the administration and especially Amy Gowan, and Council Chair, Mary Kay Sigaty, for working hard for months on this legislation reorganizing the mission of the board and allowing the Agricultural Land Preservation Board to better listen to the issues concerning agriculture in the county.

The need for this change was initiated when a member of the community came to the ALP Board wanting to bring up an issue and was turned away because listening to the community was not, according to Ho Co code, in the stated purview of the board. The resulting work to remedy this brings us to this legislation. What this legislation does is to keep the agricultural land preservation program in tact while also allowing the board to look at the bigger picture of agriculture in Howard County. And it will allow citizens to bring issues concerning agriculture to the board for their input. Placing the board in the Office of Community Sustainability allows the board to bridge silos and to form new partnerships. If ecology has taught us anything it is that everything is connected. This proposed legislation will simply now allow communication to flow between the parts.

Someone once said, if farming were easy, everyone would do it. But it isn't easy and the field (pardon the pun) is constantly changing. Passing this legislation to allow better communication will allow agriculture to better meet the needs of our community in the future.



To: Howard County Council

From: Kathy Johnson

September 17, 2018

Council Bill 63-2018

Council Members,

The Agriculture Marketing Program of the Howard County Economic Development Authority is testifying in support of Council Bill 63-2018. This bill provides the agriculture community the opportunity to express concerns and issues to a group of their peers, who in many cases may have a better understanding of the issues that the farmer may be dealing with. The Agriculture Preservation Board can then assist in the issues of the agriculture community with recommendations to the County Council.

Thank you for the continued efforts to work with the agriculture community to improve relationships within the county.