

Introduced 09.03.2024  
Public Hearing 09.16.2024  
Council Action 10.07.2024  
Executive Action 10.10.2024  
Effective Date 10.10.2024

## County Council of Howard County, Maryland

2024 Legislative Session

Legislative Day No. 10

Bill No. 49 -2024

Introduced by: The Chairperson at the request of the County Executive

Short Title: Emergency Appropriations- Economic Development Authority – Farmer Grants

Title: AN ACT making emergency appropriations pursuant to Section 610(b) of the Howard County Charter and amending the Annual Budget and Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2025 to provide additional spending authority in the Economic Development Authority for farmer grants; and declaring that this Act is an Emergency Bill necessary to meet a public emergency affecting life, health or property.

Introduced and read first time Sept 3, 2024. Ordered posted and hearing scheduled.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Having been posted and notice of time & place of hearing & title of Bill having been published according to Charter, the Bill was read for a second time at a public hearing on Sept 16, 2024.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

This Bill was read the third time on Oct 7, 2024 and Passed , Passed with amendments \_\_\_\_\_, Failed \_\_\_\_\_.

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 8 day of Oct, 2024 at 2<sup>00</sup> a.m. (O)

By order Michelle Harrod  
Michelle Harrod, Administrator

Approved by the County Executive Oct 10, 2024

Calvin Ball  
Calvin Ball, County Executive

NOTE: [[text in brackets]] indicates deletions from existing law; TEXT IN SMALL CAPITALS indicates additions to existing law; Strike-out indicates material deleted by amendment; Underlining indicates material added by amendment

1           **WHEREAS**, Council Bill No. 27-2024 (CB27) is known as the Annual Budget and  
2 Appropriation Ordinance of Howard County, Fiscal Year 2025 and contains the capital and  
3 operating budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025; and  
4

5           **WHEREAS**, the Maryland State Climatologist reported that in 2024 the summer months  
6 in Howard County have so far been among the warmest in county history, with mean  
7 temperatures hitting 3.6°F above normal in June and 3.3°F above normal in July; the month of  
8 June was the third hottest June on record for Howard County, while maximum temperatures in  
9 July reached the fifth warmest levels for this month in Howard County history; and  
10

11           **WHEREAS**, the Maryland State Climatologist also reported that in 2024 precipitation in  
12 Howard County has been drier than normal, totaling about half the level of normal precipitation  
13 for the months of June and July, taking the County from abnormally dry conditions in June to  
14 moderate drought conditions in July, which typically result in low water supply and damage to  
15 crops; and  
16

17           **WHEREAS**, the recent heat and drought conditions have posed significant challenges  
18 for Howard County farms, leading to notable crop losses and a rise in input costs that negatively  
19 affects County farmers and impact the broader agricultural community; and  
20

21           **WHEREAS**, the County would like to provide grant assistance to farmers impacted by  
22 this summer’s drought-like conditions and to farmers impacted by climate change; and  
23

24           **WHEREAS**, in order to provide such grant assistance, funding needs to be increased to  
25 the Economic Development Authority, who will be awarding the grants; and  
26

27           **WHEREAS**, funding will come from unrestricted fund balance in the Agricultural  
28 Preservation and Promotion Fund; and  
29

30           **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 15.500 of the Howard County Code, the purpose of the

1 Agricultural Preservation and Promotion Fund is to “protect the health, safety and well-being of  
2 present and future residents of Howard County by advancing the sustainability of agriculture as a  
3 viable sector of the County's economy;” and  
4

5 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to Section 610(b) of the Howard County Charter, this Emergency  
6 Bill is necessary to meet a public emergency affecting life, health or property.  
7

8 **NOW, THEREFORE,**  
9

10 **Section 1. Be It Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland, that the following  
11 emergency appropriation to the Economic Development Authority is authorized and approved for  
12 the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025, as shown below:  
13

14 **Economic Development Authority**

15 D000 – Economic Development Authority

16	Fiscal Year 2025 Agricultural Preservation and	
17	Promotion Fund Appropriation before transfer	\$734,000
18	Plus Additional Appropriation	<u>\$1,000,000</u>
19	Fiscal Year 2025 Agricultural Preservation and	
20	Promotion Fund Appropriation after transfer	\$1,734,000

21  
22 **Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland that  
23 in the current expense budget and any Fund Statements attached to Council Bill No. 27-2024 or  
24 incorporated by reference, all subtotals, totals, and other calculated figures shall be adjusted, as  
25 needed, to accommodate this Act.  
26

27 **Section 3. And Be It Further Enacted** by the County Council of Howard County, Maryland that  
28 this Act is adopted as an emergency measure to address an immediate public emergency  
29 affecting life, health or property and having been passed by two-thirds of its members, this Act  
30 shall be effective immediately upon its enactment.



# Howard County

## *Internal Memorandum*

SUBJECT: Council Testimony and Fiscal Impact Statement  
Emergency Appropriation – Farmer Grants

TO: Brandee Ganz  
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Jennifer Jones, CEO  
Howard County Economic Development Authority

James Zoller, Administrator  
Office of Agriculture

DATE: August 20, 2024

The Howard County Economic Development Authority, along with the Howard County Office of Agriculture, express their support for Council Bill No. \_\_\_\_, which will appropriate \$1,000,000 in Agricultural Preservation and Promotion Funds to a grant program for farmers impacted by recent heat and drought conditions.

Losses stemming from extreme weather conditions have tested the resilience of Howard County farmers this summer. These challenges have reverberated across various farming sectors, including commodity crop farms, produce growers, and hay producers.

Howard County is experiencing the detrimental effects of climate change. The Maryland State Climatologist reported that mean temperatures in Howard County reached 3.6°F above normal in June and 3.3°F above normal in July, making it the third hottest June and fifth hottest July in Howard County's history. This extreme heat was coupled with drought conditions brought on by rainfall that was roughly half normal levels over the same period of time.

For commodity crop farmers, the situation has been exacerbated by soaring input costs—such as seed, fuel, and fertilizer—paired with persistently low crop prices. Produce farmers have faced additional hurdles, incurred higher irrigation expenses while witnessed a decline in visitors to their pick-your-own facilities due to the relentless heat. Similarly, hay farmers are grappling with reduced harvests as drought conditions persist, and the timing of their third cutting is now at risk of frost damage. The repercussions of these losses are significant, particularly for livestock farms, which will experience elevated feed and hay prices and a shortage of availability.

Local farmers have shared sobering accounts of crop loss and increasing operating costs that threaten the health of their businesses and way of life. It is imperative that we stand together to address these pressing challenges and ensure that our farmers can continue to thrive amidst the adversities presented by this year's extreme weather.

This \$1,000,000 appropriation from the Agricultural Preservation and Promotion Fund will underwrite a grant program designed to provide vital support to our farmers who have faced significant challenges due to this year's extreme weather conditions. This program aims to alleviate some of the financial pressures created by this summer's weather.

This initiative is not just a lifeline; it is a commitment to sustaining agriculture in our community, empowering farmers to continue their invaluable work and contribute to the richness of our local economy. Together, this grant funding will foster resilience and support the backbone of our agricultural landscape.

Fiscal Impact

The fiscal impact of this legislation is \$1,000,000, using fund balance in the Agricultural Preservation and Promotion Fund.

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, stands enacted on  
October 10 2024.

Michelle Harrod  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been passed by the yeas and nays of two-thirds of the members of the Council notwithstanding the objections of the Executive, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having received neither the approval nor the disapproval of the Executive within ten days of its presentation, stands enacted on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, not having been considered on final reading within the time required by Charter, stands failed for want of consideration on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, having been disapproved by the Executive and having failed on passage upon consideration by the Council stands failed on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council

BY THE COUNCIL

This Bill, the withdrawal of which received a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Council, is withdrawn from further consideration on \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michelle R. Harrod, Administrator to the County Council