



Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Maryland Food System Resiliency Council

Communication and Coordination Subcommittee
Virtual Open Meeting
January 30, 2023 1:00pm -2:00pm

1. **Welcome** - Michael J Wilson Committee Chair
 - a. Appointed Members Attendance:
 - i. Michael J Wilson (voting member of committee)
 - ii. Anne Palmer (voting member of committee)
 - iii. Diana Taylor (voting member of committee)
 - iv. Stephanie Lansing (voting member of committee)
 - v. Steve McHenry (voting member of committee)
 - vi. Nancy Nunn (voting member of committee)
 - vii. Daphene Altema
 - viii. Beth Brewster
2. **Adoption of Minutes** - Meeting Minutes from 1/23/23 Adopted
3. **Bill Review** - Ben Yelin, CHHS
 - a. [HB0032](#) - Maryland Food System Resiliency Council
 - i. Hearing: Wednesday, 2/1, 3pm
 - ii. Sign-ups:
 - iii. Synopsis: Establishing that the Maryland Food System Resiliency Council is in the Office of Resilience in the Maryland Department of Emergency Management; and altering the process for electing a co-chair of the Council.
 - iv. Group Discussion:
 1. Montgomery Food Council will provide verbal testimony.
 2. Michael J provided verbal testimony last week, as this bill is cross-filed.
 - v. Committee position: Support, provide testimony



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- b. [HB0119](#) - Primary and Secondary Education - Comprehensive Health Education Framework - Established
 - i. Hearing: Wednesday, 2/1 - Ways and Means
 - ii. Sign -ups: Monday 1/30 and Tuesday 1/31, 8am -3pm
 - iii. Synopsis: Requiring the State Department of Education, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health, to develop a comprehensive health education framework; requiring each county board of education to create an age -appropriate curriculum that is consistent with the comprehensive health education framework; requiring each county board to establish a method by which a parent or guardian may opt out of certain topics, subject to certain requirements; etc.
 - iv. Group Discussion:
 - 1. This bill was flagged by staff specifically due to the focus on healthy eating. The council and this committee has had dialog related to categorization and discussion of nutrition education.
 - 2. This bill appears to be peripheral to the council's work.
 - v. Committee position: No position taken
- c. [HB0147](#) - Environment - Climate Crisis Plan - Requirement
 - i. Hearing: Wednesday, 2/8 - Environment and Transportation
 - ii. Sign -ups: Monday, 2 /6 and Tuesday 2/7, 8am -3pm
 - iii. Synopsis: Requiring each county to prepare a climate crisis plan to address the effects of climate change in the county; requiring each county to submit its plan to the Department of the Environment for review and feedback on or before June 1, 2024; requiring the Department to provide feedback to each county on or before November 1, 2024; requiring each county to finalize its plan on or before January 1, 2025; and requiring each county to review and update its plan at least once every 3 years.
 - iv. Group Discussion:
 - 1. This bill is an environmental bill, unclear how this bill relates to the food system.
 - 2. The Hughes Center is working on a climate vulnerability assessment for Maryland agriculture, it would be interesting to see how each county approaches their own



climate plan, looking sector by sector. We are working with Dr. Lansing on a project, some areas examined are greenhouse gas (GHG), and others that impact agricultural practices. While it is agreed the bill is not clearly related to the food system, is this a bill we should monitor? There are implications to agriculture and food access.

3. The bill as written ignores agriculture and food, if this bill is passed as written the reports would be meaningless in agricultural counties. We should contact the bill writers regarding concerns related to how the climate assessment report can ignore agriculture and food, and is therefore not a full assessment. We should encourage the inclusion of agriculture and food in categories (e.g. reduction of GHG related to manure in some counties would make a large impact). This can be brought back to the Environment and Production committee for further follow up with the bill writers. If the bill is not changed, we should not take a position.
 4. We should be careful of our capacity, we are in agreement to have Environment and Production follow-up for possible changes to the bill language. If the bill language is changed this committee can consider taking a position.
 5. This is a second year bill that was introduced last year and was not supported. Several of the requirements overlap with state/federal requirements (e.g. hazard mitigation plans), the bill language has not significantly changed therefore we do not expect support this year.
- v. Committee Position:
- d. [HB0152](#) - Department of Agriculture - Urban Agriculture Grant Fund
 - i. Hearing: Wednesday, 2/8 - Environment and Transportation
 - ii. Sign-ups: Monday, 2/6 and Tuesday 2/7, 8am -3pm
 - iii. Synopsis: Altering the purpose and contents of and the requirements and qualifications under the Urban Agriculture Grant Fund; requiring the Governor in each of Fiscal years 2025,2026,2027,2028, and 2029 to include \$250,000 for the Fund in the annual budget bill; and altering the membership of the



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Review Board established to implement the grant application process that prioritizes applications that benefit socially disadvantaged urban farmers. Introduced in the 2022 Session as HB1216. This initial bill got through to the Senate where it was favorably adopted but then died before the 3rd reading in April.

- iv. Group Discussion:
 1. Since the last session the Maryland Department of Agriculture has stepped-up their support of urban agriculture and small farms, launching several grant programs. The council supported this bill last year, MARIBCO will be supporting this bill. This bill will need amendments. Steve volunteered to support this bill and provide testimony for the committee.
 2. The committee supported this last year, and should support this bill this year via written testimony.
- v. Committee Position: Support, with written testimony
- e. [SB0002](#) - Department of Human Services - Electronic Benefits Transfer Cards - Fraud (Prevent Electronic Benefits Theft Act of 2023)
 - i. Hearing : ~~Thursday, 2/2~~—Finance— **(Hearing was canceled)**
 - ii. Sign up: ~~Wednesday, 2/1~~
 - iii. Synopsis: Requiring the Department of Human Services to reimburse a beneficiary for any benefits lost due to the fraudulent use of the beneficiary's Electronic Benefits Transfer card; requiring the State to give preference to certain vendors in the procurement process for electronic benefits distribution or administration; requiring the Department to establish a certain point of contact for investigating and identifying electronic benefits fraud; applying certain provisions of the Act retroactively; etc.
 - iv. Group Discussion:
 1. There is significant fraud/theft of SNAP benefits, this is an attempt at the State level to reimburse and improve protection against the loss of benefits. There is a partial federal fix passed in December, but we hope the state will consider other ways to protect beneficiaries.



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- v. Committee Position: Committee will consider this bill at a later time.
 - f. [SB0262](#) - Environment - On-Farm Composting Facilities - Permit Exemption
 - i. Hearing: Thursday, 2/9 - Education, Energy, and the Environment
 - ii. Sign up: Wednesday, 2/8
 - iii. Synopsis: Requiring the Department of the Environment to adopt regulations to exempt an on -farm composting facility from the requirement to obtain a permit if the on -farm composting facility uses 40,000 square feet of area or less for active food scrap composting, composts only certain materials, records the amount and source of feedstock composted and the date and time the feedstock arrived on the farm, retains the records for 3 years, and meets any other condition for a permit exemption specified in regulations.
 - iv. Group Discussion:
 - 1. The Environment and Production Committee supported this bill last year via written testimony. The bill appears to have some improved language (e.g. including onsite paperwork), recommendation to support this bill.
 - v. Committee Position: Supported
- 4. Next steps and adjourn**
- a. Meetings are weekly, on Monday from 1pm – 2pm (login information is posted on the [website](#))