

# HOUSE BILL 1338

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4r1593  
CF 4r3236

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By: **Howard County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2024

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Howard County Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board – Term Length –**  
3 **Alteration**

4 **Ho. Co. 15–24**

5 FOR the purpose of limiting the term of a member serving on the agricultural preservation  
6 advisory board in Howard County to a certain number of years; authorizing members  
7 currently serving on the agricultural preservation advisory board in Howard County  
8 to complete their terms; and generally relating to the term length of a member  
9 serving on the agricultural preservation advisory board in Howard County.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
11 Article – Agriculture  
12 Section 2–504.1  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2016 Replacement Volume and 2023 Supplement)

15 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
16 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

17 **Article – Agriculture**

18 2–504.1.

19 (a) In each county containing productive agricultural land, the county governing  
20 body shall appoint an agricultural preservation advisory board.

21 (b) (1) Except as provided in paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, the  
22 agricultural preservation advisory board shall consist of five members, at least three of  
23 whom shall be owner–operators of commercial farms who earn 50 percent or more of their  
24 income from farming.

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1           (2) In Worcester County, the agricultural preservation advisory board shall  
2 consist of seven members, at least four of whom shall be owner–operators of commercial  
3 farms who earn 50 percent or more of their income from farming.

4           (3) In St. Mary’s County, the agricultural preservation advisory board shall  
5 consist of five members, at least three of whom shall be actively pursuing the production of  
6 agricultural products for profit.

7           (c) (1) Except as provided in [paragraph (2)] **PARAGRAPHS (2) AND (3)** of  
8 this subsection, each member of an agricultural preservation advisory board shall be  
9 appointed for a term of office of [five] **5** years.

10           (2) In Charles County and in Worcester County, a member shall serve a  
11 term of office of 4 years.

12           **(3) IN HOWARD COUNTY, A MEMBER SHALL SERVE A TERM OF OFFICE**  
13 **OF 3 YEARS.**

14           ~~[(3)]~~ **(4)** No member shall serve for more than two consecutive full terms.

15           ~~[(4)]~~ **(5)** Appointment to fill a vacancy shall be for the remainder of the  
16 unexpired term.

17           (d) Duties of each agricultural preservation advisory board shall be:

18           (1) To advise the county governing body with respect to the approval of  
19 purchases of easements by the Foundation within the county;

20           (2) To assist the county governing body in reviewing the status of land  
21 under easement;

22           (3) To advise the Foundation concerning county priorities for agricultural  
23 preservation;

24           (4) To approve or disapprove an application by the county for certification  
25 or recertification under § 5–408 of the State Finance and Procurement Article;

26           (5) To promote preservation of agriculture within the county by offering  
27 information and assistance to farmers with respect to the purchase of easements;

28           (6) To meet at least annually with forest conservation district boards in  
29 order to work cooperatively to encourage the promotion and retention of farmland and  
30 woodland in their respective jurisdictions; and

31           (7) To perform any other duties as assigned by the county governing body.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

2 (a) The members of the agricultural preservation advisory board in Howard  
3 County currently serving on the effective date of this Act may serve for the remainder of  
4 their 5-year terms.

5 (b) Each subsequent member appointed after the effective date of this Act shall  
6 serve for a term of 3 years, as enacted by Section 1 of this Act.

7 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect  
8 October 1, 2024.