

Montgomery County Farm Bureau

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July22,2025

The Honorable Kathleen Stewart, President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD. 20855

Subject: Written Testimony on ZTA 25-10, Landscaping Requirements

Dear Council President Stewart:

The Montgomery County Farm Bureau (MCFB) hereby submits written testimony on ZTA 25-10 and requests that our communication be entered into the public record for the July22,2025 public hearing. MCFB is opposed to ZTA 25-10 for the following reasons:

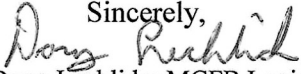
This ZTA has the potential to reduce demand for an MC produced product by 50%. Turfgrass sod is not considered to be a native species, even though it is bred and grown in this area for this geographic area. Three long standing Sod Farms could suffer financially.

I am not going to minimize native plants although they may not have adapted naturally to our changing climate as well as the turfgrass that is constantly being adapted to resist drought and heat. To quote Bernie Mihm, local landscape architect, just because a plant is native does not mean it is adaptive. Due to our proximity to the Chesapeake Bay turfgrass sod is very important and instant tool against erosion and sediment loss, which often includes phosphorous attached to the sediment. From the moment sod is installed sediment is halted. Thus, the saying, SAVE THE BAY SOD TODAY. Any runoff from that point is clean water.

- MC sediment inspectors allow removal of super silt fence when sod is installed.
- Farmers under Soil Conservation guidance install turfgrass to field waterways to clean and filter any runoff.
- Turfgrass sod is a strong barrier to unwanted weeds.
- Maintenance is very simple compared to hand removal of invasives and unwanted plants that will invade native plantings.
- The population of deer even in heavily populated areas has exploded. Turf is one of the few ground covers they do not destroy.
- Turfgrass sod is a BUY LOCAL product

If you would picture your mulch beds around your residence, about this time of year you are seeing unwanted plants growing in your mulch. Think of this on a much larger scale. Keeping unwanted plants from Native Plantings could be a daunting task for a homeowner or any maintenance crew. If you look along our highways where native plantings are present you will see a lot of unwanted, sometimes invasive plants dominating the stand.

For these reasons, and others MCFB opposes ZTA 25-10.

Sincerely,

Doug Lechliden MCFB Legislative Chair