



**Michigan
Agri-Business
Association**

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Members of the Michigan House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA), a trade association representing more than 400 members on the agricultural supply chain, including feed mills and local feed dealers across Michigan. MABA opposes HB 5239, the "Michigan Equine Promotion Act," because it creates a new, complicated requirement for an assessment on "horse feed." This program would create a new burden on local feed businesses, adding to their costs and complicating their bookkeeping. Currently, there is no such assessment on any type of feed, so this would be a completely new regulatory requirement for feed dealers.

As proposed, the legislation would require a new revenue collection program to the feed dealer and ultimately the cashier at the counter. It essentially requires the cashier to determine what feed will be used "specifically for horses," a definition that isn't always explicit, particularly in the case of custom orders that could be used for any number of livestock species, or even bagged horse feed that could also be used for other species.

In addition, these local businesses and counter personnel will be expected to explain to customers why a new cost is being passed on to them at the retail counter and collected by the feed company that receives no benefit from the program. As a result, the local feed business will bear the brunt of explaining the program and why there is a collection process, without a doubt angering their customers through no fault of their own.

If enacted, this measure will create a new bureaucracy and totally depend on local feed businesses in Michigan to enforce it. Promoting Michigan's equine industry is a laudable goal, however this legislation will do so at the expense and administrative burden of local agribusinesses. Again, we urge you to oppose HB 5239. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chuck Lippstreu

President
Michigan Agri-Business Association