



Michigan Agri-Business Association

May 8, 2025

Chairman Neyer and Members of the Michigan House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA), a nonprofit trade association representing the full scope of food and agricultural production in Michigan. MABA strongly supports House Bills 4257 and 4265. We appreciate the bipartisan nature of these important bills.

This legislation is critical to deliver certainty and a clear path forward for the deployment and use of anaerobic digesters in our state. The bills will help overcome challenges faced by our state's digester operators, food industry and farmers in recent years, and provide a clearer framework for agencies of jurisdiction, ultimately benefiting the entire food production system in our state.

Digesters play a substantial positive role in converting waste into both clean, renewable energy, and nutrient-rich digestate for use by the agricultural industry. Additionally, they are the focus of fast-moving innovation, fueled in part by industry-leading research right here in Michigan, by Michigan-based companies and Michigan State University. The future is bright for this technology, if legal and regulatory frameworks are in place to support it.

Recent years have shined a spotlight on the regulatory challenges facing digesters in Michigan. The ability to leverage the benefits of digestate derived from digester operations is critical for successful operation of digesters. Unfortunately, MABA members have experienced how an unworkable regulatory landscape limits digesters' capacity to operate – even in cases where companies have a long track record of success and are successfully operating digesters across other states. We were especially concerned and disappointed to see a major digester project recently ended in Michigan as a result of this circumstance, costing local jobs and a critical offtake path for food processing waste. I urge the Committee to consider the broader impact of such a closure on the broader agricultural system. Negative impacts on food processors, many of which provide markets for diverse agricultural production, such as Michigan-grown fruits and vegetables, will harm farmers and our rural economy.

These bills put Michigan on the pathway to the future. By clearly defining anaerobic digesters and digestate within state law, and by laying out clear reporting structures and compliance responsibilities, these bills will help digesters succeed in Michigan. Importantly, while the bills will help digesters operate with certainty in our state, they maintain important environmental and safety guardrails, and hold digester operations to a high standard.

We support these bills because they appropriately address a clear, demonstrated challenge within state law that limits innovation; they help provide a pathway to cleaner energy for our state; and they help ensure agriculture and our food production industry continue to sustainably grow and thrive. Thank you for your time and attention on this important, bipartisan bill package. I urge the House Agriculture Committee to advance the bills.

Sincerely,

Chuck Lippstreu
President
Michigan Agri-Business Association
chuck@miagbiz.org | 616-265-4698