

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

Article – Agriculture

2-510.

(f) (2) The foundation shall adopt by rule and regulation a standard priority ranking system by which it shall rank each application. The system shall be based on the following criteria as to the easements offered in any one county:

(i) The applications shall be assigned a rank in ascending order with respect to the proportion obtained by dividing the asking price by the State [appraised] easement value. The resulting rank shall be the sole criterion for establishing the priority for discounted applications that include proportions of 1.0 or lower.

2-511.

(A) The maximum value of any easement to be purchased shall be the asking price or the difference between the fair market value of the land and the agricultural value of the land, whichever is lower.

[(1)] (B) The fair market value of the land is the price as of the valuation date for the highest and best use of the property which a vendor, willing but not obligated to sell, would accept for the property, and which a purchaser, willing but not obligated to buy, would pay for the property if the property was not subject to any restriction imposed under this subtitle.

[(2)] (C) The agricultural value of land is the price as of the valuation date which a vendor, willing but not obligated to sell, would accept for the property, and which a purchaser, willing but not obligated to buy, would pay for the property as a farm unit, to be used for agricultural purposes.

[(3)] (D) (1) (I) The value of the easement is determined at the time the foundation is requested in writing to purchase the easement.

(II) The [value] FAIR MARKET VALUE shall be determined by the [foundation] DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES based on one or more appraisals by the State appraisers, and appraisals, if any, of the landowner.

(III) The [value of the easement is determined by an appraisal on the] entire contiguous acreage SHALL BE INCLUDED IN THE DETERMINATION OF THE VALUE OF THE EASEMENT, less 1 acre per single dwelling; however, except as provided in § 2-513(b)(2) of this subtitle, the entire contiguous acreage, including the 1 acre per single dwelling, is subject to the easement restrictions.

(2) (I) SUBJECT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE AGRICULTURAL VALUE OF LAND SHALL BE DETERMINED BY A FORMULA APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT THAT MEASURES THE FARM PRODUCTIVITY OF THE LAND ON WHICH THE APPLICANT HAS APPLIED TO SELL AN EASEMENT BY TAKING INTO