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January 29, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 465

Admissions and Amusement Tax – Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Thank you for your consideration of SB 465. Originally signed into law as Chapter 145 (April 2016), this legislation removes the sunset provision from the 2016 bill and continues the \$1 million allocation for the Maryland State Arts Council from the Preservation Of Cultural Arts (POCA) monies.

This \$1 million distribution has helped to bring continued investment towards MSAC over the past 5 years.

BCO serves Baltimore's opera lovers by offering top-level, professional opera performances in an affordable and accessible way, fostering outreach and development, and keeping the art form of opera an active part of Baltimore's artistic scene. We reach approximately 3,300 audience and community members (2,100 paid and 1,200 free) per season.

Our success is in large part due to annual support from the Maryland State Arts Council. We are deeply appreciative for this crucial support, as are the members of our community who attend our events. Baltimore is a great city which deserves great culture, and BCO is a thriving part of that.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB 465.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julia Cooke".

Julia Cooke
Artistic and General Director