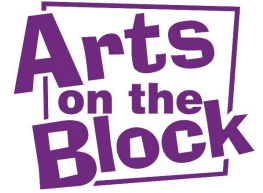


January 27, 2020



RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 135
Admissions and Amusement Tax –
Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council

Thank you for your consideration of HB135. Originally signed into law as Chapter 145 (April 2016), this legislation removes the sunset provision and continues the distribution of \$1 million to the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) through the Perseveration of Cultural Arts (POCA) monies. This \$1 million distribution has helped to bring continued investment towards MSAC over the past 5 years.

For more than a decade, Arts on the Block has been the beneficiary of the technical assistance and funding available through the Maryland State Arts Council. Our annual general operating grant is a significant source of core funding that allows the time and flexibility to reach program participants who face multiple access barriers and to grow our program in the direction of the greatest need.

In addition to resources, we appreciate and rely on the leadership provided by the Maryland State Arts Council, including gathering the arts community together in statewide and regional meetings, providing critical research and trend insights, and representing our field to other agencies and partners. Their constant, proactive presence is mission-critical to our success.

Finally, receiving an MSAC grant is a 'stamp of approval' that is an essential tool to leverage earned income and donations toward our organization. Private funders, individual philanthropists, other granting programs and corporate partners gain confidence when they know that our programs are regularly reviewed and supported by our state agency.

For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 135.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Anne L'Ecuyer", written in a cursive style.

Anne L'Ecuyer
Executive Director