



MARLOW GUITAR INTERNATIONAL

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 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.

We are a 26-year-old mid-sized non-profit arts organization that presents world-class classical guitar concerts; an annual free youth guitar competition; free interactive classical guitar programs in public schools and libraries; and other guitar-related programs in Montgomery County and other parts of Maryland. While we raise money through private donations and ticket sales, we also depend on grants from Maryland state and county arts councils to carry out our mission. In particular, funding from the Maryland State Arts Council over the past two years has helped us to develop and expand guitar programs to reach more underserved Maryland residents, including a new program providing free guitars and instruction to veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues arising from their military service.

We support HB135 because its passage will enable MSAC to continue funding programs like ours that make Maryland a better place for all of its residents. Failure to pass the bill this year would force cut-backs in arts programs across the state.

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

Duane D. Morse
Treasurer
Marlow Guitar International Incorporated
301-799-4028
Duane@marlowguitar.org

451 N. Hungerford Dr., Suite 119-482, Rockville, MD 20850