

STRATHMORE

January 22, 2020

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 135
Admission and Amusement Tax – Electronic Bingo and Tip Jars –
Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council

Thank you for consideration of HB 135. This legislation alters, beginning fiscal year 2022, the distribution of revenue from the State admissions and amusement tax on electronic bingo and electronic tip jars to require that the Maryland State Arts Council receive \$1,000,000 each fiscal year.

Strathmore presents and produces exemplary visual and performing arts programs for diverse audiences; creates dynamic arts education experiences; and nurtures creative ideas and conversations that advance the future of the arts. The organization's hallmark is the Music Center at Strathmore, with a 1,976-seat concert hall and education complex. Its core campus also includes the historic Mansion at Strathmore, which features an intimate Music Room and art galleries. Most recently, Strathmore opened AMP, a 230-seat cabaret-style venue located just up Rockville Pike from the core campus in the burgeoning Pike District of Montgomery County. Strathmore's signature mission-driven programs include the Strathmore Student Concerts, the Artist in Residence program, and Bloom, a community outreach initiative to expand arts access to every corner of Montgomery County.

The funding Strathmore receives through the MSAC is an investment in our community and demonstrates the value placed on creating a vibrant arts community that welcomes everyone. Through music, performances, exhibitions, and education programs, Strathmore is proud to be both a home for the arts and a vehicle for bringing the arts to people and places throughout the state. We serve more than 250,000 people annually and are home to seven other non-profit arts partners, including the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, National Philharmonic, Levine Music, CityDance, interPLAY Company Orchestra, Young Artists of America, and After School Dance Fund.

Having the Bill pass this year ensures that Strathmore's outreach to the community will continue uninterrupted, and it will allow us to expand our arts education initiatives to meet increasing demand. More than 45% of Strathmore's annual programming is offered free or at a discount. We serve more than 31,000 students and provide critical supplemental programs in the arts to Montgomery County Public Schools. For these reasons, I ask for a FAVORABLE REPORT on HB 135.

Regards,



Monica Jeffries Hazangeles
President and CEO