



January 24, 2020

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 135**

**Admissions and Amusement Tax – Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council**

Dear Political Leaders:

Thank you for your consideration of HB 135. Originally signed into law as Chapter 145 in April 2016, this legislation removes the sunset provision and continues the distribution of \$1 million to the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) through the Preservation of Cultural Arts (POCA) monies. This \$1 million distribution has helped to bring continued investment towards MSAC over the past 5 years, which the UMGC Arts Program is a recipient of funds from MSAC. Thus, the UMGC Arts Program is in support of HB 135. On behalf of our constituents, we hope you will pass this important bill.

As an arts organization that reaches approximately 75,000 individuals annually with art related projects, we truly rely on the funding support from MSAC. These funds allow us to produce educational art programs, interact with our community, provide meaningful discussions, and become a destination for visitors. Without it, we could not do this work. Needless to say, MSAC's funding is critical to the sustainability and growth of our organization. Having worked with other artists and organization, I often hear their positive comments about the funding they receive from MSAC that helps them to do their work in the arts and engaging community. Passing this bill will tremendously help MSAC to continue to support art organizations throughout the state of Maryland. It will also help MSAC to support individual artists who are the breath of Maryland. Additionally, the funding of this bill will help MSAC to continue to promote the state of Maryland as a lively place to call home.

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

I look forward to the celebration of the passing of this bill with YOU.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Key". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Eric Key  
Director