



MARYLAND STATE FAIR

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January 31, 2020

The Honorable Adrienne Jones
Speaker of the House
State House, H-101
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Speaker Jones,

The Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to promote, educate, and showcase Maryland's #1 industry — Agriculture, is most respectfully requesting capital funding in the amount of \$8.5 million to renovate the iconic Maryland State Fair Grandstand and Community Center.

The Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society has 2 million visitors a year to Maryland's Fairgrounds campus and generates an enormous economic impact for the State of Maryland. However, the 60-year-old Maryland State Fair Grandstand and Community Center is in deplorable condition, cost inefficient, and, as we have recently learned, dangerous.

The most critical concerns of the State Fair's Grandstand and Community Center are as follows:

- The front portion of the grandstand has recently been declared structurally unsound by licensed engineers.
- The sole elevator is not ADA compliant.
- The building is not insulated, yet used on a year-round basis, wasting vast amounts of energy and causing considerable heating expense.
- Lead paint
- Asbestos
- Crumbling Infrastructure
- Fifty-year-old bathrooms
- Corroded steel supports
- Crumbling concrete decking
- Etc.

The Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society is one of three locations in the State of Maryland that conducts live thoroughbred horse racing, the other two being Pimlico and Laurel. There is no question that all three locations have critical needs, none more so than Maryland's own Maryland State Fairgrounds.

The Maryland State Fair & Agricultural Society Inc. a private non-pro fit 501(c)(3) organization, supports agriculture, education, preserves and promotes Maryland's agricultural roots, and provides competitions and events showcasing Maryland's premier industry.

With these funds, the Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society will be able to create a much-needed community resource center, including an energy-saving winterization, bringing the facility into ADA and code compliance, providing a community hall, as well as providing space for a farmer's market and educational classroom opportunities. This will better allow the Maryland State Fairgrounds to serve the public in addition to being a showcase for all of Maryland Agriculture.

An independent consultant has determined that \$55 - \$60 million a year in economic impact is being left on the table and therefore not benefiting Maryland by the Fairgrounds facilities' failing conditions that do not allow for tourism and other uses that would drive additional economic opportunities and tax revenue for the State of Maryland.

Attached, please find the \$8.5 million Maryland State Fair Grandstand and Community Center Improvement Proposal that will address these needs.

On behalf of Maryland's own Maryland State Fair and Agricultural Society Inc. and our 2 million annual visitors who come and exhibit at the Maryland State Fair and throughout the year, we most respectfully request funding in the amount of \$8.5 million.

Sincerely,

The Maryland State Fair & Agricultural Society, Inc. Board of Directors



Gerry L. Brewster, Esq.
Chairman of the Board



Donna G. Myers
President



D. Andrew Cashman
General Manager