



**Testimony regarding Senate Bill 1081  
Education, Public Schools, Driver Education &  
Transportation to Field Trips**

**To: Chairman Guy Guzzone, Chairman, & Committee Members  
Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

**Hearing Date: March 6, 2024**

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and other Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) to request your favorable vote on **Senate Bill 1081**, particularly addressing the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Grant Program.

This program, which aims to enrich the educational experiences of young scholars, has particular significance for AVAM. Our Education Team has received repeated feedback that the largest issue prohibiting field trips for students is transportation -- to the extent that we have begun adding line-items into proposals to private foundations, requesting money to fund buses. I'm certain other museums experience the same issue.

While AVAM already welcomes over 1000 students from Maryland Title I schools each year for free workshops and tours, this number could expand greatly with funding from the State for transportation to bring students and educators to the museum. Especially with arts programs in public schools diminishing, arts educational programming such as AVAM offers is vital to an enriching, well-rounded education and life.

Thank you for all the hard work you do every year on behalf of the Arts in Maryland and Maryland students, and thank you in advance for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie S. Williams".

Valerie S. Williams  
Interim Co-Executive Director