

Town of Bladensburg

Council Members

Ward I

Trina Brown

Kalisha Dixon



Mayor

Takisha James

Council Members

Ward I

Marilyn Blount

Carrol McBryde

February 23, 2024

The Honorable Delegate Atterbeary
House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Town of Bladensburg Support of HB 1306 - Admissions and Amusement Tax - Food and Beverages

Dear Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Takisha James, and I serve as Mayor of Bladensburg, located in Prince George's County, Maryland. I want to thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of House Bill 1306, which would give our town a new way to generate revenue through the Admissions and Amusement tax. This is a priority bill for the Maryland Municipal League, and we support their efforts.

As a representative of Bladensburg and an active Maryland Municipal League member, I believe this proposed legislation aligns with our community's interests. It will positively affect the residents of my community. Bladensburg collects \$40,000 in Admissions and Amusement (A&A) tax.

Post-pandemic, we have seen the cost of providing services increase; this includes but is not limited to paying higher wages and benefits costs for employees, fuel costs, and material costs for many of the most basic of needs. Smaller local governments are limited in generating enough revenue to keep up with limited options for revenue generation. Allowing municipalities and counties to charge an extra 2% tax on on-site food and beverages would narrowly expand an existing tool and make a positive difference to local government budgets.

If Bladensburg's could charge an extra 2% on \$40,000, it could generate an additional \$800. The Town could use that to fund our Community Action Team, which supports our Youth Outreach and Cadet Program. Over 20 adolescents and teens meet weekly with our police department to promote safety and community engagement.

The proposed amendments in HB 1306 would be a small contribution to our town's economic stability, and the funds will enhance our ability to provide high-quality services to our residents. We appreciate the efforts to create legislation supporting local businesses while ensuring fair and reasonable taxation practices.

Thanks to each committee member for the opportunity to express my support for this legislation.
Again, I ask the committee to please support HB 1306.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Takisha D. James". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and 'J'.

Takisha D. James
Mayor, Town of Bladensburg