



**MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION**

February 23, 2024

Maryland House of Delegates
Delegate Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
121 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Opposition to HB 1306 - Admissions and Amusement Tax – Food and Beverages

Chairperson Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC). I am writing to you today to express MTC's opposition to House Bill 1306. The Maryland Tourism Coalition is a trade organization with members representing all areas of tourism in the State of Maryland. Our mission is to support businesses and organizations that cater to the tourism industry through education, networking, and advocacy. As such, MTC asks the committee to vote in favor of this bill.

MTC opposes this legislation as government overreach in the collection of taxes. This bill would add additional taxes on food and beverage sales for events and activities that are subject to the State's Admission and Amusement tax. These food and beverage items are already subject to State sales tax, and in the case of alcohol sales, the higher 9% sales tax. Adding these items into the calculation of the Admission and Amusement tax amounts to a double taxation on these items.

Since most events and businesses that are subject to the Admission and Amusement Tax are tourism related businesses, this will have a negative effect on the tourism industry. These businesses already operate on thin profit margins. This increase in admission and amusement tax would further decrease these margins or force these businesses to increase prices to pass the costs onto consumers. Continuing forcing tourism business to increase costs makes the tourism industry in Maryland less competitive than our neighboring states and the District of Columbia.

The State of Maryland is already collecting taxes on food and beverages sold in Maryland. The State should not be 'double-dipping' on taxes for these items, especially when it really only targets the tourism related businesses in Maryland. For these reasons, the Maryland Tourism Coalition asks this committee to vote against this piece of legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Libber

Legislative Chair

Maryland Tourism Coalition

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