



Date: March 25, 2025

Heritage Montgomery (the Montgomery County Heritage Area) is in FULL SUPPORT of the legislative initiative SB0980 which will allow for lifting the cap on Maryland Heritage Area funding. The proposed legislation would allow the Maryland Heritage Areas program to receive up to \$12 million annually, lifting the current cap of \$6 million. The legislation does not guarantee funding, of course, but allows for this important program to receive a greater share of Program Open Space funding from the state's transfer tax, if and when it should become available.

These are difficult times for our state, and the Maryland Heritage Area program is part of the solution. With community driven projects and initiatives that grow our local economies, this program has a proven record of return on investment that is stunning: \$7 return for every \$1 of state funding! Also, thousands of jobs are supported, and millions in state and local tax revenue is generated.

Examples of tremendous projects in Montgomery County include, to name a few: consistent technical, grant support and elevation of undertold stories and communities at sites such as Scotland AM Zion Church, Sugarland/St. Paul Church, Pleasant View, Josiah Henson Park, and Button Farm which highlight African American history; The Nepal Education and Culture Center and the Latvian Museum which preserve and share the stories of immigrants; Clara Barton House and Rachel Carson historic sites focusing on women's heritage; as well as better known sites such as the C&O Canal, Glen Echo Park, Woodlawn Manor, Montgomery History and Sandy Spring Museum.

Right now, there is an \$8 million funding gap each year, stalling high-impact projects. Grant levels have not been raised in 30 years, and this future funding will allow the grant levels to rise to where they can be the most impactful in our counties, towns, and communities. The Maryland Heritage Areas cover a portion of every county in the state, and the City of Baltimore.

This legislation queues up Maryland for future growth! Please support SB0980. Please invest in Maryland's heritage. Please invest in Maryland's future.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Rogers", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Sarah Rogers  
Executive Director