



**Testimony in Opposition of House Bill 997**  
**Admissions and Amusement Tax – Food and Beverage**

**To:** The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary  
Chair, Ways & Means Committee

**Written testimony from:** Kristen Pironis  
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**Date:** February 20, 2025

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

On behalf of Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, I am writing to express our **opposition** to House Bill 997 regarding Admissions and Amusement Tax – Food and Beverages, which would authorize a county or municipal corporation to impose the admissions and amusement tax on gross receipts from the sale of food or beverages at a rate up to 3 percent.

Tourism is an economic ecosystem, delivering opportunity and quality of life for Marylanders that is derived from visitor spending. The travel sector is an integral part of Maryland's economy, contributing over \$2 billion in state and local tax revenues each year. By increasing the tax rate on food or beverages, this legislation would disincentivize consumers from spending their money in counties or municipalities where the increased rate is adopted. Over time, travelers may avoid counties with prohibitive tax rates in favor of those without them, ultimately reducing the tax base this legislation aims to increase. Additionally, as the volume of tourists decreases, the tax burden of this proposal will be increasingly shouldered by the individuals who live in the jurisdictions that adopt it. The additional cost will factor into their cost of living and quality of life calculations. In response, residents in these communities may avoid businesses where food is taxed at a higher rate and may even consider leaving altogether.

While we understand the importance of finding new revenue streams for local municipalities, this legislation would make the jurisdictions that adopt it less desirable to both live in and travel to which negatively impacts residents and tourists. Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County strongly urges that you oppose HB997 and requests an unfavorable report.

Thank you for your service and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Pironis  
Executive Director  
Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County