

EMERGENCY BILL

L2

7lr2326

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**By: Washington County Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: March 3, 1997

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

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A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Washington County - Tourism**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing a Washington County Convention Bureau; providing for  
4 a transition board of directors of the Bureau to be appointed by the members of the  
5 House of Delegates and the Senate of Maryland; providing for the duties of the  
6 transition board; providing that on or after a certain date the board of directors  
7 appointed by the transition board shall have ultimate and clear control of both the  
8 staff and budgets of the Bureau; clarifying that certain funds shall be used to  
9 underwrite the Bureau; transferring a certain requirement for an expenditure for a  
10 certain fiscal year from a certain entity to the Bureau; prohibiting the Bureau from  
11 taking certain employment actions against certain employees on or before a certain  
12 date; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to the  
13 promotion of tourism in Washington County.

14 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
15 Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions  
16 Section 9-318(b)(4)  
17 Annotated Code of Maryland  
18 (1996 Replacement Volume)

19 BY adding to  
20 The Public Local Laws of Washington County  
21 Section 1-607  
22 Article 22 - Public Local Laws of Maryland  
23 (1991 Edition and August 1994 Supplement, as amended)

24 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
25 Chapter 665 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1996  
26 Section 2

27 Preamble

28 WHEREAS, To address concerns about the effectiveness of current efforts to  
29 promote tourism in Washington County and the City of Hagerstown, a group of interested  
30 individuals and representatives of the City of Hagerstown, Washington County, the

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1 Chamber of Commerce, and the Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and  
2 Visitors Bureau, Inc. met in a series of meetings of an ad hoc group convened at the  
3 request of the Chairman of the Washington County Delegation to the General Assembly  
4 and known as the Tourism Roundtable to discuss new goals for local tourism efforts and  
5 to consider a structure to best realize those goals; and

6 WHEREAS, The Tourism Roundtable meetings developed three primary goals for  
7 the new structure: to have clear goals, to have clear accountability and responsibility, and  
8 to have clear results and measurements of results; and

9 WHEREAS, It is the intent of the General Assembly to provide for implementation  
10 of the goals and new structure developed by the Tourism Roundtable meetings; now,  
11 therefore,

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
13 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

14 **Article 24 - Political Subdivisions - Miscellaneous Provisions**

15 9-318.

16 (b) (4) Washington County:

17 (i) May not deduct more than 5% of the revenue for administrative  
18 costs under subsection (a)(1) of this section; and

19 (ii) Shall deposit all remaining revenues, after the distribution under  
20 subsection (a)(1) of this section, in the general funds of Washington County to underwrite  
21 the Washington County tourism budget and[, when established,] the Washington County  
22 Convention Bureau.

23 **Article 22 - Washington County**

24 1-607.

25 (A) THERE IS A WASHINGTON COUNTY CONVENTION BUREAU.

26 (B) (1) A TRANSITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE  
27 MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES AND THE SENATE OF MARYLAND WHO  
28 REPRESENT WASHINGTON COUNTY.

29 (2) THE TRANSITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS SHALL:

30 (I) IMPLEMENT THE CHANGES OUTLINED IN THE REPORT OF THE  
31 TOURISM ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS, INCLUDING MARKETING ACTIVITIES FOR THE  
32 HAGERSTOWN/WASHINGTON COUNTY AREA THROUGH CONSUMER-BASED  
33 PROMOTIONS, MOTOR COACH TOUR RECRUITMENT, MEETING AND CONVENTION  
34 MARKETING, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PROMOTIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL  
35 CORPORATIONS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY;

36 (II) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 1997, NOMINATE A BOARD OF  
37 DIRECTORS THAT CONSISTS OF NOT MORE THAN 15 MEMBERS WHO REPRESENT A  
38 BALANCE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERESTS RELATED TO TOURISM IN THE CITY  
39 OF HAGERSTOWN AND WASHINGTON COUNTY; AND

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1 (III) SERVE UNTIL IT APPOINTS A NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON  
2 OR BEFORE DECEMBER 31, 1997.

3 (C) ON OR AFTER JANUARY 1, 1998, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPOINTED  
4 BY THE TRANSITION BOARD UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION SHALL HAVE  
5 ULTIMATE AND CLEAR CONTROL OF BOTH THE STAFF AND BUDGETS OF THE  
6 WASHINGTON COUNTY CONVENTION BUREAU.

7 **Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1996**

8 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, notwithstanding Article  
9 24, §§ 9-304 and 9-318 of the Annotated Code of Maryland:

10 (1) for Fiscal Year 1997, the rate of the hotel tax imposed in Washington  
11 County shall be 3.5%; AND

12 (2) the additional revenue collected as a result of the increase in the tax rate  
13 under paragraph (1) of this section of this Act shall be distributed to the City of  
14 Hagerstown to be used for advertising and marketing expenses for promoting Civil War  
15 tourism in the Washington County area]; and

16 (3) for Fiscal Year 1998, the Hagerstown/Washington County Convention  
17 and Visitors Bureau shall expend at least \$55,000 for advertising and marketing expenses  
18 for promoting Civil War tourism].

19 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That for Fiscal Year 1998, the  
20 Washington County Convention Bureau shall expend at least \$55,000 for advertising and  
21 marketing expenses for promoting Civil War tourism.

22 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December  
23 31, 1997, the Washington County Convention Bureau may not take any involuntary  
24 employment actions against Washington County employees who, as of the day before the  
25 enactment of this Act, work for the Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and  
26 Visitors Bureau, Inc.

27 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency  
28 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health and safety, has  
29 been passed by a ye and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to  
30 each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is  
31 enacted.