

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

Re-referred to: Economic Matters, March 7, 1997

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Committee Report: Favorable

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 20, 1997

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CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

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,

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1 Chapter 665 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 1996

2 Section 2

3 Preamble

4 WHEREAS, To address concerns about the effectiveness of current efforts to  
5 promote tourism in Washington County and the City of Hagerstown, a group of interested  
6 individuals and representatives of the City of Hagerstown, Washington County, the  
7 Chamber of Commerce, and the Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and  
8 Visitors Bureau, Inc. met in a series of meetings of an ad hoc group convened at the  
9 request of the Chairman of the Washington County Delegation to the General Assembly  
10 and known as the Tourism Roundtable to discuss new goals for local tourism efforts and  
11 to consider a structure to best realize those goals; and

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

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

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

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

21 9-318.

22 (b) (4) Washington County:

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

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

29 **Article 22 - Washington County**

30 1-607.

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

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

35 (2) THE TRANSITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS SHALL:

36 (I) IMPLEMENT THE CHANGES OUTLINED IN THE REPORT OF THE  
37 TOURISM ROUNDTABLE MEETINGS, INCLUDING MARKETING ACTIVITIES FOR THE  
38 HAGERSTOWN/WASHINGTON COUNTY AREA THROUGH CONSUMER-BASED

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1 PROMOTIONS, MOTOR COACH TOUR RECRUITMENT, MEETING AND CONVENTION  
2 MARKETING, AND SPECIAL PROJECTS AND PROMOTIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL  
3 CORPORATIONS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY;

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

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

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

14 **Chapter 665 of the Acts of 1996**

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, notwithstanding Article  
16 24, §§ 9-304 and 9-318 of the Annotated Code of Maryland:

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

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

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

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

29 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before December  
30 31, 1997, the Washington County Convention Bureau may not take any involuntary  
31 employment actions against Washington County employees who, as of the day before the  
32 enactment of this Act, work for the Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and  
33 Visitors Bureau, Inc.

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

