

# HOUSE BILL 897

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CF SB 896

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By: **Baltimore City Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2024

Assigned to: Appropriations

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Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 5, 2024

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## CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment and Operating ~~Authority~~**  
3 **Organization Task Force**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment  
5 and Operating ~~Authority~~ Organization Task Force to study and make  
6 recommendations concerning the membership, purpose, and function of an ~~authority~~  
7 organization to govern the renovation, revitalization, financing, and ongoing  
8 maintenance and management of a certain Baltimore Convention site and certain  
9 surrounding areas; and generally relating to the Baltimore Convention and Tourism  
10 Redevelopment and Operating ~~Authority~~ Organization Task Force.

11 Preamble

12 WHEREAS, The General Assembly finds that the general welfare of the people of  
13 Maryland is directly dependent on the continual encouragement, development, growth, and  
14 expansion of business, industry, commerce, and tourism within the State and, thus, the  
15 promotion, attraction, stimulation, development, and expansion of business, industry,  
16 commerce, and tourism in the State should be fostered; and

17 WHEREAS, The Baltimore Convention site, because of its size and location in a  
18 first-class city, is vital in attracting business, industry, commerce, and tourism to  
19 Baltimore City, the surrounding counties, and the State as a whole; and

20 WHEREAS, To redevelop, revitalize, and promote the Baltimore Convention site  
21 within this State, the Baltimore Convention Center commissioned an independent study of

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 convention and visitor industry governance models, day-to-day management approaches,  
 2 and funding models prevalent nationally and approaches that would be appropriate for the  
 3 future success of the Baltimore Convention Center; and

4 WHEREAS, An important aspect of the redevelopment and successful continuation  
 5 of the Baltimore Convention Center should be a holistic evaluation of the immediate  
 6 surrounding area and the identification of underutilized State and local real property  
 7 assets, including the Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel; and

8 WHEREAS, The General Assembly finds, for the benefit of the people of the State,  
 9 it is necessary to provide additional and flexible means of governing, redeveloping,  
 10 revitalizing, constructing, designing, managing, financing, operating, and promoting the  
 11 Baltimore Convention site and the immediate surrounding area; now, therefore,

12 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
 13 That:

14 (a) In this section, “Baltimore Convention site” has the meaning stated in §  
 15 10-601 of the Economic Development Article.

16 (b) There is a Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment and Operating  
 17 ~~Authority~~ Organization Task Force.

18 (c) The Task Force consists of the following members:

19 (1) the Mayor of Baltimore City, or the Mayor’s designee;

20 (2) one member of the Senate of Maryland who is a member of the  
 21 Baltimore City Delegation, appointed by the President of the Senate;

22 (3) one member of the House of Delegates who is a member of the Baltimore  
 23 City Delegation, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

24 (4) the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary’s designee;

25 (5) the Administrator of the Maryland Transit Administration, or the  
 26 Administrator’s designee;

27 (6) the Chair of the Maryland Tourism Development Board, or the Chair’s  
 28 designee;

29 (7) the Chair of the Maryland Stadium Authority, or the Chair’s designee;

30 ~~(6)~~ (8) the Chair of the Maryland Economic Development Corporation, or the  
 31 Chair’s designee;

32 ~~(7)~~ (9) the Executive Director of the Baltimore Convention Center;

1           ~~(8)~~ (10)       the Chair of the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Board;

2           ~~(9)~~ (11)       the President and Chief Executive Officer of Visit Baltimore;

3           ~~(10)~~ (12)       the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Baltimore  
4 Development Corporation;

5           ~~(11)~~ (13)       the President of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore;

6           ~~(12)~~ (14)       the Executive Director of the Maryland Tourism Coalition;

7           ~~(13)~~ (15)       a representative from the restaurant industry in Baltimore City,  
8 appointed by the Restaurant Association of Maryland;

9           ~~(14)~~ (16)       a representative of the hotel industry in Baltimore City,  
10 appointed by the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association; ~~and~~

11           (17) a representative of the Greater Baltimore Committee, appointed by the  
12 Greater Baltimore Committee; and

13           ~~(15)~~ (18)       the following members appointed by the Mayor of Baltimore City:

14                   (i)     a representative of the African American business community  
15 within a 0.5-mile radius of the Baltimore Convention site;

16                   (ii)    a representative from ~~a~~ an African American-owned  
17 development entity with significant financial investment in property within a 0.5-mile  
18 radius of the Baltimore Convention site; and

19                   (iii)   a resident who lives within a 0.5-mile radius of the Baltimore  
20 Convention site.

21           (d)     The Chair of the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Board shall serve as the  
22 chair of the Task Force.

23           (e)     The Department of Commerce shall provide staff for the Task Force.

24           (f)     A member of the Task Force:

25                   (1)     may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

26                   (2)     is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State  
27 Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

28           (g)     The Task Force shall:

1 (1) study the establishment of a Baltimore Convention and ~~Tourism~~  
2 ~~Redevelopment and Operating Authority~~ tourism redevelopment and operating  
3 organization to govern and redevelop, revitalize, construct, design, manage, finance, and  
4 operate certain State and local real property assets while promoting the Baltimore  
5 Convention site and the immediate surrounding area; and

6 (2) make recommendations on:

7 (i) the membership of the ~~Authority~~ organization;

8 (ii) the ~~Authority's~~ organization's purpose and function, including its  
9 ability to:

10 1. acquire by purchase, gift, or devise any property,  
11 franchises, and other interests in the Baltimore Convention site and any offices, parking  
12 lots or garages, access roads, hotels, restaurants, railroad sidings, and other structures,  
13 improvements, equipment, furnishings, or other property functionally related to and  
14 located in the immediate surrounding area of the Baltimore Convention site, including the  
15 Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel, and take title to the property in the name of the  
16 ~~Authority~~ organization or its designated agent;

17 2. determine the character of any renovation, revitalization,  
18 or development projects relating to the Baltimore Convention site and the immediate  
19 surrounding area, excluding Areas 13, 14, and 15A as designated by the City of Baltimore  
20 Inner Harbor Project I Urban Renewal Plan;

21 3. enter into any agreements, leases, partnerships, or  
22 contracts necessary to renovate, revitalize, maintain, and manage the Baltimore  
23 Convention site or any other State or local real property assets identified by the Task Force;

24 4. fix and collect rates, rentals, fees, and charges for services  
25 required to successfully operate the Baltimore Convention site or any other State or local  
26 real property assets;

27 5. establish rules and regulations for the use of the Baltimore  
28 Convention site or any other State or local real property assets; and

29 6. issue bonds for renovation, revitalization, and ongoing  
30 maintenance and management of the Baltimore Convention site or any other State or local  
31 real property assets identified by the Task Force, including operating expenses; and

32 (iii) any other matter the Task Force deems necessary for the  
33 establishment and implementation of an effective ~~Authority~~ organization.

34 (h) In conducting its study and making recommendations in accordance with  
35 subsection (g) of this section, the Task Force shall consider the findings and

1 recommendations in the Baltimore Convention Industry Benchmark Study previously  
2 commissioned by the Baltimore Convention Center.

3 (i) On or before December 1, 2024, the Task Force shall report its findings and  
4 recommendations to the Mayor of Baltimore City, the Governor, and, in accordance with §  
5 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

6 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
7 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2025, this  
8 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no  
9 further force and effect.

Approved:

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Governor.

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Speaker of the House of Delegates.

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President of the Senate.