

HOUSE BILL 897

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CF 4lr3275

By: **Baltimore City Delegation**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2024

Assigned to: Appropriations

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

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

4 FOR the purpose of establishing the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment
5 and Operating Authority Task Force to study and make recommendations
6 concerning the membership, purpose, and function of an authority to govern the
7 renovation, revitalization, financing, and ongoing maintenance and management of
8 a certain Baltimore Convention site and certain surrounding areas; and generally
9 relating to the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment and Operating
10 Authority 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
22 convention and visitor industry governance models, day-to-day management approaches,
23 and funding models prevalent nationally and approaches that would be appropriate for the
24 future success of the Baltimore Convention Center; and

25 WHEREAS, An important aspect of the redevelopment and successful continuation
26 of the Baltimore Convention Center should be a holistic evaluation of the immediate

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 surrounding area and the identification of underutilized State and local real property
2 assets, including the Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel; and

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

7 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
8 That:

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

11 (b) There is a Baltimore Convention and Tourism Redevelopment and Operating
12 Authority Task Force.

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

14 (1) the Mayor of Baltimore City, or the Mayor's designee;

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

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

19 (4) the Secretary of Commerce, or the Secretary's designee;

20 (5) the Chair of the Maryland Stadium Authority, or the Chair's designee;

21 (6) the Chair of the Maryland Economic Development Corporation, or the
22 Chair's designee;

23 (7) the Executive Director of the Baltimore Convention Center;

24 (8) the Chair of the Baltimore Convention and Tourism Board;

25 (9) the President and Chief Executive Officer of Visit Baltimore;

26 (10) the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Baltimore
27 Development Corporation;

28 (11) the President of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore;

29 (12) the Executive Director of the Maryland Tourism Coalition;

1 (13) a representative from the restaurant industry in Baltimore City,
2 appointed by the Restaurant Association of Maryland;

3 (14) a representative of the hotel industry in Baltimore City, appointed by
4 the Maryland Hotel Lodging Association; and

5 (15) the following members appointed by the Mayor of Baltimore City:

6 (i) a representative of the business community within a 0.5-mile
7 radius of the Baltimore Convention site;

8 (ii) a representative from a development entity with significant
9 financial investment in property within a 0.5-mile radius of the Baltimore Convention site;
10 and

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

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

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

16 (f) A member of the Task Force:

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

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

20 (g) The Task Force shall:

21 (1) study the establishment of a Baltimore Convention and Tourism
22 Redevelopment and Operating Authority to govern and redevelop, revitalize, construct,
23 design, manage, finance, and operate certain State and local real property assets while
24 promoting the Baltimore Convention site and the immediate surrounding area; and

25 (2) make recommendations on:

26 (i) the membership of the Authority;

27 (ii) the Authority's purpose and function, including its ability to:

28 1. acquire by purchase, gift, or devise any property,
29 franchises, and other interests in the Baltimore Convention site and any offices, parking
30 lots or garages, access roads, hotels, restaurants, railroad sidings, and other structures,
31 improvements, equipment, furnishings, or other property functionally related to and

1 located in the immediate surrounding area of the Baltimore Convention site, including the
2 Hilton Baltimore Inner Harbor Hotel, and take title to the property in the name of the
3 Authority or its designated agent;

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

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

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

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

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

19 (iii) any other matter the Task Force deems necessary for the
20 establishment and implementation of an effective Authority.

21 (h) In conducting its study and making recommendations in accordance with
22 subsection (g) of this section, the Task Force shall consider the findings and
23 recommendations in the Baltimore Convention Industry Benchmark Study previously
24 commissioned by the Baltimore Convention Center.

25 (i) On or before December 1, 2024, the Task Force shall report its findings and
26 recommendations to the Mayor of Baltimore City, the Governor, and, in accordance with §
27 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

28 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
29 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2025, this
30 Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no
31 further force and effect.