



# MARYLAND CENTER FOR THE ARTS

February 12, 2020

The Honorable Guy Guzzone  
Chair, Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**SENATE BILL 465**- Admissions and Amusement Tax - Electronic Bingo and Tip Jars - Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council- **SUPPORT**

Dear Chairperson Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

I am the Operations Manager at the Maryland Center for the Arts, a 501(c)3 nonprofit arts organization in Harford County dedicated to providing creative and collaborative experiences in all disciplines of the arts, and building and operating a center to provide the region with enhanced access to quality space to present, exhibit, and participate in the arts. We receive annual program operating support from the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) through Creativity Grants as well as through grants from the Harford County Cultural Arts Board which receives funds from MSAC.

I can attest to the great benefit and impact of arts programming in our community in Harford County. I grew up in Harford County training and performing as a ballet/contemporary dancer, actor, and cellist with various dance and music schools. My dance training started when I was four years old, and I started playing the cello at age nine. I also performed in plays/musicals throughout my student life. My academic and personal achievements were shaped by my well-rounded education in dance, theater, and music, and the experience I gained performing in front of audiences instilled my self-confidence. Arts programs benefit and positively impact youth and teens living in diverse neighborhoods in Harford County. My friends who participated in the arts programs with me came from diverse backgrounds and different neighborhoods throughout Harford County.

I, among many others, have personally experienced the power of the arts. Not only do the arts inspire and challenge, they also have a unique way of expanding one's intelligence and perspective. As Rep. Alma Adams once said: "The arts are a universal language that help us understand diversity, cultures and our most complex issues ... Each generation has its own unique set of challenges, but it is through the arts and humanities that we learn compassion, understanding and critical thinking skills that enable us to address these problems and find solutions."

SB 465 is important because it will help the Maryland State Arts Council continue to fund arts programs that benefit youth in diverse communities throughout the State of Maryland. I request your favorable report for the Admissions and Amusement Tax - Electronic Bingo and Tip Jars - Distribution to Maryland State Arts Council, which will positively impact and benefit the lives of residents and visitors through quality arts programming.

Sincerely,

Amanda Pugh, Operations Manager  
Maryland Center for the Arts

**PERFORM. EXPRESS. ENHANCE. INSPIRE.**

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