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Bill 1056

Favorable with Amendment

(language should be included that the Bowie Race Track property/land come to the City of Bowie)

I, Isabel Pocurull, currently serve as Vice President of The Huntington Heritage Society, Bowie, MD. This Society was founded in 1986 as an organization whose mission is to identify, document, collect, and preserve the physical and oral history of the Huntington section of Bowie. Huntington City is the birthplace of Bowie. We are approaching our 35th birthday and our mission is still the same. The disposition of the Bowie Race Track property has been under much consideration and has come to the attention of this historical society. The City of Bowie Community Meeting held on January 4, 2020 showed how important this land is to the residents of Bowie. It's not just land, it is history.

The track contributed much to the lives of Bowie – and to people up and down the east coast. Its history goes back to 1914. The track provided income to locals on many levels and brought lots of people to Bowie for a fun day at the races. Bowie embraces its history, its heritage and we welcome commemorating and preserving Bowie's role in the racing industry through protecting this land. The track was a natural addition to the area, home to the Belair Stud Farm, founded by Samuel Ogle and credited as the "Cradle of American Thoroughbred racing". Belair's – and Bowie's – romance with the Thoroughbred continued into the 20th century. In the 1890's, the Woodward family came to Belair. Owner William Woodward's grand passion was the Thoroughbred and the race track. Under his ownership, the Belair Stud fielded many winning runners, the three most famous being Gallant Fox, his son Omaha, and Nashua. Gallant Fox (1930) and Omaha (1935) remain, to this day, the only father/son horses to capture racing's famed Triple Crown.

The preserving of this land would be an important piece in the rich legacy of Bowie. The Huntington Heritage Society supports our 23rd District delegates and their amendments to Bill 1056. We encourage the committee to accept these amendments. The Huntington Heritage Society is "Favorable, with the amendment", with the language being included that the Bowie Race Track land come to the City of Bowie. We further support the City dedicating a portion of this land as a memorial park recognizing the race track as a contributor to the history, to the heritage of Bowie.