



Larry Hogan | Governor  
Boyd Rutherford | Lt. Governor  
Kelly M. Schulz | Secretary of Commerce

January 14, 2021

Mayor Emily Keller (email: [ekeller@hagerstownmd.org](mailto:ekeller@hagerstownmd.org))  
City of Hagerstown, City Hall  
1 East Franklin Street  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Re: Letter of Support for High-Level Baseball in Hagerstown

Dear Mayor Keller,

I do not believe that I have had the opportunity of congratulating you on your recent election victory. Your position as the Mayor of Hagerstown has never been more significant as we witness the many changes happening in our world around us. I would like to offer myself as a resource should you have any questions throughout your term. Economic development, and our economy in general, has never been as critical of a topic as it is today.

One of the Commissions that we oversee at the Department of Commerce is the Maryland Economic Development Commission. Commission member Howard "Blackie" Bowen is a conscientious and productive member of the Commission whom I have had the opportunity to get to know over the years and believe his commitment to the community is more than genuine. Recently, he contacted me regarding a worthwhile initiative.

There is no question that high-level baseball creates excitement, provides entertainment, and adds to the quality of life in a community. There have been numerous articles citing its positive impact, along with the need for family-friendly opportunities.

The Department of Commerce is also aware of the positive synergy which the balanced blend of arts, recreation, sports, retail, and dining have on a community. There have been numerous studies which support plans for venues which would attract visitors, and the resulting positive economic impact. High-level baseball, played in Hagerstown, would generate significant economic benefits.



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Recent estimates indicate that a high-level baseball team in Hagerstown would create millions of dollars of new spending. Minor league baseball, in recent years, had an annual economic impact in Washington County of between 3 and 5 million dollars. A thriving baseball organization is good business for a community.

Additionally, baseball is woven into Hagerstown's history. Organized baseball has been played in Hagerstown since the 1880's. Hagerstown has the historic distinction of having the first minor league affiliate in Maryland. Built in 1930, Hagerstown's current stadium is one of the oldest in professional baseball. Also, the first time that the word "baseball" was printed in an American newspaper, was in the Hagerstown Torch and Light, in 1828!

The Department of Commerce is fully supportive of a high-level baseball team in Hagerstown. There would be economic and enhanced quality of life benefits. I look forward to the opportunity to once again see high-level baseball played in Hagerstown.

Sincerely,

Kelly M. Schulz  
Secretary, Maryland Department of Commerce