



17301 Valley Mall Road
Hagerstown, MD 21740
Tel: 301.582.0701 • Fax: 301.582.1617

March 4, 2021

Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
RE: Senate Bill 926
Annapolis, Maryland

Senators:

I would like to voice my support of Senate Bill 926 for the Multiuse Sports & Events Arena in Hagerstown. To build a facility of this nature, in our area, will greatly enhance the economy of Western Maryland not just Hagerstown. The location chosen is in the city's core. This area lies within an Opportunity Zone that will bring other businesses and entertainment venues to the downtown and also help current businesses thrive, as the area, hard hit due to COVID, tries to rebound. The Arena will drive investor confidence into the City's core. Not only will this bring additional tourism into the area, it will support the current employment and create new employment opportunities. The most disadvantaged population in Hagerstown will be able to find employment, as the location is within walking distance or easily accessed via public transportation.

As multiple events would be held at this location, the hospitality and tourism industry, within the county would reap the benefits. As a business located outside the city's core, we recognize that having a strong center city only expands to the outer edges making Hagerstown more viable than ever before. The draw of this facility would continue the growth of the retail, hotel and restaurant industries in Hagerstown, especially at the already growing Halfway Blvd area where the Valley Mall is located.

Many other counties have seen economic projects from the lottery commissions. Washington County has supported the lottery, by contributing \$39M to the State in 2020 alone. We understand that some of these proceeds have come back to our schools, but based on the amounts, it is clear that we have not come close to seeing a significant return spent in Western Maryland from our yearly contributions. The counties that have seen tourism driving projects experienced major economic growth. It would be nice for Western Maryland to be on the receiving end of your support at this time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie M Rohm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Julie" being the most prominent.

Julie M. Rohm
General Manager
Valley Mall, Hagerstown
Francis Scott Key Mall, Frederick