

February 3, 2021

Senate Bill 529

**Anne Arundel County -
Hotel Tax Alterations -
Distribution of Revenue**

Senate Budget and Tax Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

Senate Bill 529 grants Anne Arundel County the ability to provide oversight to private organizations that receive a mandated distribution from County hotel tax revenue, while maintaining the existing funding formula that our County partners rely on to do their work.

The Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors Bureau (“Visitor’s Bureau”) and the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County, Inc. (“Arts Council”) are critical partners for the County. As the Destination Marketing Organization (“DMO”) for Anne Arundel, the Visitor’s Bureau helps to generate revenues for the local economy by promoting the County and the Chesapeake Bay to leisure and business travelers across the country and around the world. The Arts Council is the premier resource of the cultural arts community in the County, advocating for and generating investment in the visual arts, performing arts, and historic preservation. Under the Bill, the County will continue to provide the current distribution of 17% of the County hotel tax to the Visitor’s Bureau and 3% to the Arts Council.

The County has an obligation to ensure that funds from the County hotel tax are used responsibly. Current law does not require the Visitor’s Bureau or the Arts Council to come before the County Council for their appropriations, nor are they required to allow the County Auditor access to their records. This Bill will ensure that the County Auditor and the County Council are legally able to provide the oversight our residents deserve.

For those reasons, we request a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 529.