



To: Maryland State Senate Budget and Tax Committee

I am writing in support of senate bill 926. Being born and raised in Washington county and later returning to take over my family business has offered me a wide-ranging perspective as to why this is so important to our Western MD community.

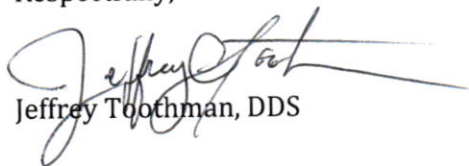
I grew up watching Sun's games during the summer and playing junior-league football in the outfield of Sun's stadium in the fall. A multi-use venue in Hagerstown would offer future generations that same opportunity (and much more). This is invaluable in any community and especially true in a community like ours that has few other safe and constructive outlets for younger people.

On moving back to Washington county as an adult I have gained a greater appreciation for how important it is to foster the revitalization of our historic but often underserved community. This is especially true regarding our town centers. Since I moved home 10 years ago I have observed incredible additions to downtown Hagerstown, including restaurants, schools, a new library, a "cultural" walking trail, and the MD theater. While each of these features bring people downtown, none offer the true anchor to bring the critical mass that a multi-use venue would.

As a small business owner I recognize the importance that the trickle-down effect of a multi-use venue would offer our community. From sponsorship opportunities within the venue to increased disposable income surrounding it, there is a genuine opportunity for compounded organic community growth. This includes business opportunities as well as residential development, something that is currently sorely lacking in our downtown.

I truly believe that a multi-use venue would be a game-changer for Hagerstown and Washington county and would reinstate us as a hub of Western Maryland. My business would certainly promote it and, more importantly, my children (and someday their children) would certainly greatly benefit from it. Please consider these comments as you support this bill.

Respectfully,


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