

# HISTORIC ST. MARY'S CITY

A MUSEUM OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY AT  
MARYLAND'S FIRST CAPITAL

**Senate Bill 946**  
**Historic St. Mary's City Fort to 400 Commission**  
**Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

**Letter of Support**

Dear Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

The Historic St. Mary's City Commission is in full and enthusiastic support of SB946 - Historic St. Mary's City Fort to 400 Commission and appreciates Senator Bailey for introducing this legislation.

A 400th anniversary of the founding of our beloved Terra Marie is so very significant, exciting, and will require a great deal of planning and effort to make it the success that it deserves. The Commission established by SB946 will lead the planning efforts to observe and celebrate Maryland's 400th anniversary in 2034.

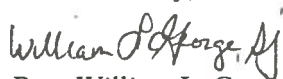
The Bill's preamble states that it "is in the interest of Marylanders to provide for appropriate activities to commemorate and maximize the understanding of residents and visitors about the founding of Maryland and its meaning to Marylanders, particularly of Maryland's leadership in establishing the principle of religious toleration" and aligns directly with the mission of the HSMC Commission which is "to preserve and protect the archaeological and historical record of Maryland's first colonial capital and to appropriately develop and use this historic and scenic site for the education, enjoyment, and general benefit of the public."

We appreciate the Bill's requirement that "As Maryland's first settlement and first capital, Historic St. Mary's City will play an important role in leading these observances." The outdoor living history museum commemorates and stewards the site of the fourth permanent English settlement in North America, Maryland's first city, the locus of ideas still important to Maryland, the nation and the world as the site where the Mathias De Sousa, the first man of African descent to participated in a legislature, Margaret Brent, the woman honored as first female attorney in the nation requested a vote an voice, and the birthplace of religious toleration that is now embodied in the US Constitution. Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) has been recognized as a National Historic Landmark since 1969 and is one of Southern Maryland's leading tourism attractions.

The proposed Commission's charge to "provide leadership for and coordinate economic development opportunities in and around St. Mary's City to promote the region for future generations" will help realize St. Mary's County's Tourism and Hospitality Plan goal to further develop its tourism economy and Maryland's Statewide Preservation Plan's goal to "Enhance and foster the ability to learn more about Maryland heritage through public archaeology and archaeological collections [and through] public history and new technology" at the same time developing a world class historic site and attraction to benefit the County, Southern Maryland region, and our State.

We look forward to this legislation passing and to participating in the Fort to 400 Commission in the planning of this very special and historic anniversary celebration.

Most sincerely,



Rev. William L. George, S.J.  
Chairman



Regina M. Faden, Ph.D.  
Executive Director

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