



HYATTSVILLE

Community Development Corp

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January 18, 2021

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB256

Arts and Entertainment Districts – Artistic Work and Arts and Entertainment Enterprise – Definitions

Thank you for your consideration of SB256 – Arts and Entertainment Districts – Artistic Work and Arts and Entertainment Enterprise – Definitions. The Hyattsville Community Development Corporation (HCDC) supports SB256 as the managing entity of the Gateway Arts & Entertainment District, one of the 29 operating Arts & Entertainment (A&E) Districts in the State of Maryland.

Founded in 2001 following the drive of four municipalities acting as one community to revitalize their neighborhoods, the Gateway Arts & Entertainment District has emerged as a safe, vital, and attractive mixed-use environment that celebrates the diversity of the artists that work in the 2.2-mile corridor along Route One.

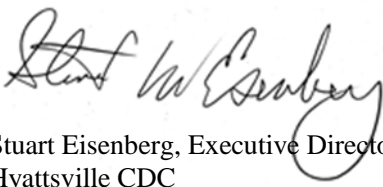
Since its establishment, the rich artistic creativity of the Gateway Arts & Entertainment District has contributed to attracting hundreds of millions of dollars in development and increased assessable tax base. It has supported the emergence of a variety of studio collaboratives, restaurants, coffee houses, local performance venues, craft breweries, galleries and entertainment. A profusion of arts-related businesses such furniture up-cyclers, craft retailers, designers, an art supply store, and a paint/design center that support have been opened, and they extend the influence of the artists' community and build the economic vitality of the region.

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) has provided significant support to the Gateway Arts & Entertainment District through its role in administering A&E Districts across the State. Specifically, MSAC has afforded technical and strategic financial support to promote available A&E tax incentives for artists within our District; to leverage our District's unique identity to attract tourism; and to increase our District's arts activity, particularly through supporting events such as the Annual Downtown Hyattsville Arts Festival.

In developing SB256, a technical improvement bill clarifying the tax credits for the A & E Districts, MSAC collected feedback over a period of several years from A&E District managers and constituents from around the State. The clarifications in this legislation will allow MSAC and the A & E Districts to more effectively communicate incentive eligibility and meet their revitalization and economic development goals. As we continue to weather the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, artists need support now more than ever to sustain and grow their livelihoods. SB256 will help MSAC better support artists and the arts sector.

For these reasons, HCDC respectfully requests a FAVORABLE REPORT on SB256.

Sincerely,



Stuart W. Eisenberg, Executive Director
Hyattsville CDC