



January 15, 2021

Senator Delores G Kelley, Chair  
Maryland Senate Finance Committee  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 256: Arts and Entertainment Districts – Artistic Work and Arts and Entertainment Enterprise - Definitions

POSITION: Support

Dear Senator Kelley:

I am writing to express Downtown Frederick Partnership's strong support for SB 256: Arts and Entertainment Districts – Artistic Work and Arts and Entertainment Enterprise – Definitions. The Partnership together with the Frederick Arts Council co-manage the state recognized Downtown Frederick A&E District.

Downtown Frederick is where history meets martini bars, where shop owners really do know your name, where high tech mingles with old school and where you can always find the perfect plate to satisfy your hunger. On any given visit to Downtown Frederick, you can enjoy fine art, shopping and dining, and, in non-pandemic times, a calendar chockfull of events. Take in the abundance of public art, murals and placemaking projects that give Downtown Frederick its unique vibe. Enjoy one of our homegrown breweries, distilleries or wine shops, and explore over 200 independently-owned businesses.

Designation as an A&E District is both a recognition of the value of the artistic and creative community to Downtown Frederick's economic health, vibrancy and success as well as an opportunity to provide support to help grow this key sector of our economy. The Partnership has benefitted from a strong working relationship with the MSAC. The organization has received both financial and technical support that has assisted our efforts to improve our A&E District.

The Partnership appreciates the opportunities organized by the MSAC to participate in conversations and offer input on this proposed legislation. The Partnership believes the approval of this bill will assist in better communicating this program to our creative community, especially the updated terminology used to define artistic work. While the proposed improvements to the legislation would be helpful at any time, the impacts of the pandemic create an even stronger need to help sustain and grow our artist community.

Sincerely,

*Kara Norman*

Kara Norman, AICP; Executive Director