

**STATE OF MARYLAND**

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

**LARRY HOGAN**

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**JOHN C. WOBENSMITH**  
SECRETARY OF STATE

January 12, 2021

Senator William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support - SB 339 - Sister-State Relationships - Maintenance and Development

Dear Senator Smith:

The Sister-States program is a vital international program of the State of Maryland. I have been honored to be a part of this program, and work with the amazing individuals that make up our Sister-State committees for the past six years. This program adds a depth to our international partnerships across the globe that no other program does, and the people of Maryland surely benefit from the diplomatic, cultural, educational, and economic ties this program has developed over the past 40 years.

I am pleased that the State was able to maintain the two staff members from this office by reassigning them to Commerce, which has allowed the day-to-day management of the Sister-States relationships to continue.

Commerce has played a role alongside the Office of the Secretary of State in our Sister-State activities - such as co-hosting delegations, organizing joint business events with embassies, coordinating with our Sister States when traveling overseas, and participating in Sister-State MOU signings. I look forward to them continuing to support this program.

As Secretary of State, I remain committed to advancing Maryland's international relationships. I support any decision on the Sister-State Program made by the Governor and Legislature to maintain a robust Sister-State Program and will actively assist with any necessary transition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Wobensmith".

John C. Wobensmith  
Secretary of State