

Donna G Myers
President of the Board of Directors
Maryland State Fair & Agricultural Society, Inc.
In Support of HB0940

HB0940 Gaming – Regulation of Fantasy Gaming Competitions and Implementation of Sports Wagering

Testimony in support of HB 940.

The fair has been diligent in its 142 year history to stay relevant to its beginnings as a Fair which provided a social gathering for farmers, homemakers, and 4-H and FFA members to showcase their livestock and home goods, and provide entertainment for fairgoers. Although still providing that platform, the fair continues to evolve and expand to ensure opportunities for all Marylanders to either participate or be educated on the importance of agriculture and how it affects every aspect of their lives. The fair continues to work toward following its mission statement of “Providing agriculture and nature-based education on a year-round basis through partnerships, community engagements, and development of both temporary and permanent exhibits, in addition to providing scholarships to youth”. The fair has developed educational opportunities such as the U-Learn center where youth and their families come and can interactively see and learn about science behind food production, GPS technology used in farming, watch a calf or a piglet be born at our birthing center, or visit Horseland located at the racetrack that gives children the opportunity to learn about horse and ponies, and engage in horse related activities. We are most excited to be in the planning stages of making our Nature Play Space a year-round area on the North end of our campus that will provide children the opportunity to learn and play in a natural setting in the woods with natural materials.

The funding from sports betting would give us the ability to further develop opportunities for youth to learn year-round about local agriculture and the benefits to Marylanders through open space and locally produced food. We would continue to develop relationships with area schools, providing opportunities for hands on Agriculture through a greenhouse that school children could use to learn about gardening and growing plants as part of their course study. Skills that will be useful to them their whole lives.

The financial benefits of Sports betting revenue that Maryland State Fair would receive would be shared with all Marylanders through programs and opportunities of education with hands on learning.

