



## Maryland Soccer Foundation

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### House Bill 897

*Maryland Stadium Authority – Sports and Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022*

#### **Written Testimony: Support & With Proposed Amendments:**

Dear Delegate McIntosh and Appropriations Committee,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Executive Director of the Maryland SoccerPlex and Adventist HealthCare Fieldhouse in Montgomery County. I am also currently the Chair of TEAM Maryland, the sports marketing collective of the Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) within Maryland, as well as serve on the Board of Directors for the Sports Events and Tourism Association (SportsETA), the trade group for sports tourism organizations. Wearing all three of these hats provides great perspective on the impact that House Bill 897 would have on the economy of Maryland, and we urge you to support both House Bill 896 and 897, as amended.

Tourism is major part of the Maryland Economy and affects every part of the State, from the mountains of Garrett County, to the I-95 Corridor, and to the communities on the Eastern Shore and Ocean City. Sports tourism is major component of the tourism industry. In the post-COVID recovery, sport tourism was the first industry to return, which, in turn, touches so many other businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors. Sports travelers, event organizers, and venues spent \$45.1 billion in 2019, which generated \$103.3 billion in business sales when including indirect and induced impacts, according to a 2020 report from Tourism Economics. In Maryland youth and amateur sports generates over \$225 million in direct spending for our economy. Investments by the State in sports tourism pay for themselves in the economic impact and development around sports. For every \$1 spent on tourism advertising \$31 flows back into the State Economy.

This pair of bills allow Maryland to remain at the forefront of a highly competitive market. Allowing the Stadium Authority to make additional investments in our professional stadiums help showcase the State to the larger sports market. Providing funding for additional funding for investment in the creation of new sports venue assets and improvements to existing assets will provide our communities across the State to continue the work they have already done to bring world class sporting events to Maryland. Please support House Bill 896 and 897 to continue to make Maryland a sports destination.

Respectfully,

Matthew Libber  
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