



# BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

15 March 2022

The Honorable Maggie McIntosh, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
Room 121, Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 897 – Sports Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022 – SUPPORT**

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the House Appropriations Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to express Harford County's **SUPPORT** for **HB 897 – Sports Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022**.

To further establish Maryland as a premier destination for sports, this legislation will create a \$200 million fund to promote the development of sports entertainment facilities across the state, including minor league stadiums where renovations will be necessary to maintain affiliations with major league teams and continue to play ball in our state. Proceeds allocated from the Maryland state lottery, up to \$25 million annually, would be used to pay debt service on the bonds issued to finance the various projects. This new fund also could be utilized by other sports entertainment venues such as equestrian centers, multi-use sports complexes and venues for youth and amateur sports tournaments.

The ballparks located in Aberdeen, Bowie, Frederick, Hagerstown, Salisbury and Waldorf offer year-round budget-friendly family entertainment and inspire economic development in those six counties in Maryland. These minor-league teams provide benefits to their communities and promote synergies between the Orioles and their Maryland-based affiliates. According to the Major League Baseball Research Data Portal, since 2005 there have been 14.3 million visitors to Maryland communities through Orioles minor league operations. The minor league ballparks, and other sports and facilities across the state, create jobs and generate visitor spending with the resulting tax revenues reinvested to fund essential citizen services and improve Marylander's quality of life.

In our great County of Harford, where we are proud to be home of the Aberdeen IronBirds, MLB Data has shown that from 2005 through 2019, nearly 3 million fans have come to Harford County and Aberdeen to enjoy the experience of an IronBirds game and our County.

This legislation when enacted will unquestionably further elevate Maryland as a premier sports and entertainment destination by investing in our facilities to maintain our professional teams, promote healthy lifestyles, and create business opportunities across the state for years to come. For the reasons expressed in this letter, we respectfully request a **FAVORABLE REPORT** on HB 897.

Sincerely,

Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive

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