

March 11, 2022

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 Terry Hasseltine and I am the President of the Sport and Entertainment Corporation of Maryland. I am writing on behalf of the Sport and Entertainment Corporation of Maryland today - an organization that represents and supports several major events in Maryland. As we continue to battle the effects to COVID-19, we recognize that any support for Camden Yards will be a huge benefit to our sports eco-system. We urge you all to support increasing the debt cap listed in HB 896 as well as the joint legislation, HB897 as amended.

In order to address the long-term future of the stadiums legislation was introduced to increase the debt cap from \$235 million to \$1.2 billion. Companion legislation was also introduced to create a \$200 million fund to promote the development of sports entertainment facilities across the state, including minor league stadiums and other critical sport tourism facility assets. These minor league teams and facilities provide economic benefits to communities and promote synergies with professional teams and major event opportunities.

With the ballpark upgrades now required by the recent reorganization, Maryland's minor league teams will maintain their big league affiliations' and continue to play ball in our state. The minor leagues serve as a year- round training hub for professional baseball and creates a robust pipeline of talent for the majors. The ballparks located in Aberdeen, Bowie, Frederick, Hagerstown, Salisbury and Waldorf offer year-round budget-friendly family entertainment and generate economic impact in those six local communities in Maryland.

HB 897 Sports Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022, through the MSA, is an initiative to help fund the much needed capital improvements at the many sport tourism assets across the state that are critical to our efforts to bring major events to Maryland to spur our economy.

With the amendments proposed, we can expand opportunities in those facilities as well as grow and support other opportunities outside of just baseball like; soccer, equestrian, cycling,



softball, rugby, cricket and lacrosse to name a few. In addition, the amendment allows the Maryland Stadium Authority through Maryland Sports to compete for and support major events on a level playing field against our competition sets. The major event world is extremely competitive and the competition for these events is only getting tougher especially as they have shown once again their resiliency to tough economic times.

As we compete with surrounding states to attract visitors, investing in our assets is critical. We know the resiliency of this amazing community and we look forward to your support moving forward.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. H. O.', written over a white background.

President