



Worcester County Office of Tourism

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February 14, 2022

Chair Guzzone and Members of the
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee
Senate Miller Building, 3 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

SUPPORT SB622 - Income Tax - Credit for Travel, Hospitality, and Entertainment

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee,

My name is Melanie Pursel, Director of the Office of Tourism and Economic Development in Worcester County. Representing Maryland's Coast, we have worked tirelessly over the past 2 years to continue to encourage travel to our region during the pandemic, but it has been challenging for many of our businesses.

I am writing in support of SB622, which will provide an income tax credit to Marylanders who vacation 50 miles or more from their place of residency in the state of Maryland. The tourism industry as a whole has been severely affected by this pandemic and we need to take proactive measures. As the 11th largest industry in the state, it is imperative to economic recovery that we enlist all means necessary to support tourism. Typically, tourism supports 226,000 direct and indirect jobs!

With the wonderful outdoor recreation, amazing hotels and restaurants and endless opportunity to explore, this incentive will help not only our region but the entire state of Maryland. We would love to welcome more guests from Western Maryland, Baltimore City, Harford and Cecil to choose a Maryland experience versus travelling to our neighboring states and spending their money. And like wise our Worcester and Ocean City residents would be encouraged to travel to the other scenic and exciting parts of Maryland.

Thank you so very much for your time and consideration and please feel free to reach out to me directly with any questions at all. As one of the hardest hit industries throughout the pandemic, it is vital now more than ever to support your tourism and hospitality businesses. I encourage everyone on the Budget and Taxation Committee to support this creative and impactful solution.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Pursel, M.S

Director

Office of Tourism and Economic Development