

Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401



March 6, 2023

Dear Senator Guzzone:

Friends of Jerusalem Mill would like to express our strong support for Senate Bill 874, which would establish Community Safety Works as an ongoing program within the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Established as a budget initiative within the Department, Community Safety Works has already provided valuable assistance to nonprofit organizations, businesses and local governments through targeted investments in crime prevention that impact community safety.

As a non-profit, charitable organization, our mission is to preserve one of Maryland's hidden treasures, the 18th-19th century Jerusalem Mill Village. Among other structures, this village is home to a 1772 grist mill and one of only three remaining working covered bridges in our state. This mostly-preserved village has attracted visitors from every state and from 49 other countries. Unfortunately, it also attracts "legend trippers" and vandals intent on conducting paranormal activities, placing graffiti, and attempting to remove artifacts of historical significance. We also have some physical features that have deteriorated to the point of becoming a safety hazard to curious and adventurous visitors. As an all-volunteer organization that depends primarily on donations, memberships, sponsorships and grants, programs like those offered by the DHCD are essential to ensuring the safety of our volunteers and visitors and the security of our antique collection and our living history programs.

We request a favorable report on SB874 to continue this valuable program. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Albright
Vice President and Curator
Friends of Jerusalem Mill