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Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Capital Budget

Pensions

Chair, Public Safety,  
Transportation, and Environment

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and  
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area

Chair, Joint Subcommittee on  
Program Open Space/Agricultural  
Land Preservation

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 10th, 2023

**Testimony in Favor of SB0425**  
**Maryland Historic Trust – Historic Preservation Partnership Program and Fund –**  
**Established**

Chairman Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, & members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 425, which will ensure that the currently underutilized Historic Preservation Loan Program can be used effectively to help further fund important preservation efforts here in Maryland.

As this Committee knows – the laws and programs we pass here in the General Assembly are only as good as they are able to be executed by the different Departments or Agencies that oversee them – and the Historic Preservation Loan Program is no different. Due in large part to bureaucratic hurdles and other difficulties, MHT has been unable to fully utilize this important preservation tool.

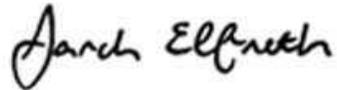
The legislation as drafted was introduced to abolish the Loan fund and transition it into Partnership Program and Fund to be operated by a qualifying non-profit organization – with the underlying goal being that the nonprofit can more quickly and efficiently get money out the door quicker. However, after meeting with both MHT and Preservation Maryland I am proud to report that we have found a solution that will make all parties support the bill.

We have been working with the amendment office to create finalized language based on this agreement, but unfortunately were not able to receive a finalized amendment in time for the hearing today. In concept, the amendment will keep the Loan Program active and instead

authorize MHT to make an expenditure to a “Qualifying Non-Profit” as defined in the bill to more quickly facilitate preservation dollars getting out the door more efficiently.

Once again I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 425 as amended to ensure that this underutilized program can reach its full potential. As soon as we receive the agreed upon amendment language from all stakeholders we will submit it to the Committee for consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Elfreth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sarah Elfreth