



TOWN OF OCEAN CITY

The White Marlin Capital of the World

March 1, 2023

Judicial Proceedings Committee
The Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Jr.
2 East
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: SB 642 Vehicle Laws - Annual Vehicle Shows - Motor and Trailer Homes

Dear Chairman Smith and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Travel and tourism is a critical driver of economic growth and employment in Maryland. Millions visit Ocean City each year, drawn by the promise of unrivaled destinations and experiences, whether touring for pleasure, visiting friends and family, or conducting business. Whether exploring our 10 miles of beautiful coastline and state parks, cultural heritage or immersing themselves in what makes this destination unique, our visitors bring an immense economic benefit to Maryland. Not to mention, what they take home when they leave is just as important as the jobs and growth their visits create, as many return year after year.

RV and Van Life Travel have become very desirable after COVID-19. According to the 2022 KOA Camping Report RV ownership has increased by 62% in the last 20 years. In 2021, camping accounted for 40% of all leisure trips, with more than half of the travelers including camping in some or all of their travels. In addition, 56% of campers are interested in an RVing experience in 2022, including 47% who would like to experiment with full-time RVing and 43% who want to live the "van life." Families are discovering new ways to live, work and play, and COVID-19 has instilled a sense of adventure and a desire to get out and explore now.

People want to network with like-minded travelers when creating their next mobile adventure, and Ocean City is one of the best places to learn and experience RV Life because of what surrounds us. Ocean City, MD, has over 20 + Campgrounds within a 60-mile radius and 18+ RV Dealerships within a 60-mile radius. Our destination also embraces all the outdoor activities that RV Life seeks: bike riding, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, birdwatching, hiking, and more.

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Currently, the law restricts any outside MD licensed dealer (anything that needs a title and tag from the MVA) from displaying in the state of Maryland. Unless the vendor owns and operates a business in the State of Maryland, they cannot display their product at the Convention Center, which limits the depth of what we can provide for those seeking these experiences. Most of what we consider "local RV dealers" are located in Delaware and Virginia, followed by Maryland's 8 RV dealers on the other side of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge (outside the 60-mile radius). There are also many RV brands not sold in Maryland, limiting the choices we can offer at our show – like Airstream, located in VA and NJ.

The Ocean City East Coast traveler is from Maryland, DE, VA, PA, NJ, NY, OH and more and we would like to include surrounding RV and trailer dealers at our show, increasing the diversity and product mix, in turn giving the consumer more options, and more reasons to visit our town for the RV Show. There will be businesses from many different states showcasing their products, destinations, and inventive solutions for life on the road and we would like to include the RV Dealers and trailer dealers who make it possible for them to travel to different places to also be able to display.

I strongly and respectfully request that this committee provide Senate Bill 642 with a favorable report.

Jennifer Sabini Evans
Social Media & Digital Manager
Ocean City Tourism