



Office of Tourism & Economic Development  
107 West Green Street, Snow Hill, MD 21863  
(410) 632-3112 • [www.MarylandsCoast.org](http://www.MarylandsCoast.org)

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 Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

My name is Melanie Pursel, Director of Tourism and Economic Development for Worcester County, which of course includes Ocean City. I am here today respectfully asking for your support of SB 642 Vehicle Laws - Annual Vehicle Shows - Motor and Trailer Homes.

Worcester County is home to about 54,000 residents; however, we host nearly 8 million guests per year. Travel and tourism is a critical driver of economic growth and employment in Worcester County.

Over the past 3 years, we have seen a tremendous shift in travelers' choices, interests and values when it comes to making a vacation decision. Outdoor recreation, adventure and unique and authentic experiences have become a priority for couples, families and even business travel. We are truly blessed to have so many of these assets in our region and as a result, we have recovered quickly from the economic downturn that the pandemic caused. Tourism in our state has seen more than 90 % of pre-pandemic figures (tourism tax codes). In order to continue on this path to a healthy economy, including job growth, it is critical that we enthusiastically attract visitors and offer what they are seeking.

In that arena of outdoor recreation, RV and Van Life Travel have become even more attractive and popular. 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.

With an array of camping experiences in Maryland, from the mountains to the beaches, we want to be able to cater to these travelers.



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Worcester County alone has over 20 + Campgrounds within a 60-mile radius. As a result, Ocean City has planned a RV show in the newly expanded Convention Center. However, the success of the show may be diminished due to lack of participation from dealers outside of Maryland.

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 participate in this type of show, which limits the variety of what we can provide for those seeking these experiences. As amended, this bill would address the number of shows allowed for vendors as well as only allowing out of state dealers to display products- no deposits or point of sale would be allowed.

We feel that this would be a reasonable local bill that would bring additional visitation, room nights, tax revenue back to the state and more.

As a result, I respectfully ask for a favorable report for SB 642. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Melanie Pursel, Director