

COURTNEY WATSON  
Legislative District 9B  
Howard County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee

*Subcommittees*

Oversight Committee on Pensions

Chair, Transportation  
and the Environment



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 20, 2024

HB-504 Department of Planning - Maryland Humanities Council

**SPONSOR:** Delegate Courtney Watson

**POSITION:** Favorable

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Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Appropriations Committee, for the record I am Delegate Courtney Watson here to present House Bill 504.

HB504 provides general operating support to nonprofits doing important humanities work across Maryland. In the FY24 budget, Maryland Humanities was awarded \$1,000,000 for the program and was able to award 95 general operating support grants of \$10,000 each to organizations in 23 jurisdictions, including Baltimore City.

Maryland Humanities has built this program on a framework for equitable grant-making, and it allows organizations to be empowered to apply resources to their most pressing needs. They are leading the way in the state and the regional humanities council communities.

This grant program fills an important void in humanities funding in Maryland. There is currently no other statewide grant humanities grant funding program focused on general operating support. I am happy to sponsor a bill to support this already successful program doing important work in Maryland. I kindly request that this committee provide a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Courtney Watson".

Delegate Courtney Watson