

HB0688

January 9, 2024

Maryland General Assembly
House Appropriations Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Barnes and Committee Members:

The Maryland Museums Association, Inc., an 501c3 nonprofit, is in enthusiastic support of HB0688 Historical and Cultural Museum Assistance Program (MAP) at the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT).

From 1991 until 2011, MAP grants served Marylanders by providing operating grants, technical assistance, and educational opportunities to museums, historic sites, and historical societies – then the funding stopped. In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly required a report by MHT regarding museum and preservation funding. The report's top recommendation was to reinstitute and fund MAP. Now is the time.

Maryland's organizations have lacked state financial support for too long – yet, countless organizations feed our minds with online lectures during Pandemic lockdowns and let us walk their historic grounds – and sadly, some institutions were not able to endure and have closed.

If we are to be able to have the opportunity to return to preserved collections to continue to untangle and reveal and commemorate and celebrate Maryland history, like during the upcoming commemorations of America 250 (2026) and Maryland Rediscovery 400 (2034) I, then those collections must first exist. To ensure that, it is imperative that we support museums of all sizes to care for their collections with professional staff and suitable storage conditions. These are the first steps to providing access to students, researchers, and visitors. MAP was an essential source of funding for this never-ending need.

Please join Maryland's more than four-hundred museums in support of HB0688 and a minimum appropriation of \$5M for the Historical and Cultural Museum Assistance Program (MAP) at the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT).

Sincerely,
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Meagan Baco, Board Chair
Maryland Museums Association, Inc.
www.mdmuseums.org