

Testimony to the Budget and Taxation Committee
Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Name: Elizabeth Shatto, Executive Director
Organization: Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area (HCWHA),
22 S. Market Street, Suite 215, Frederick, MD 21701
Issue: SB0956 Appropriation to the Marilyn Hatza Memorial Strengthening the Humanities Investment in
Nonprofits for Equity (SHINE) Grantmaking Initiative
Position: FAV

As a small, nonprofit organization, our organization has received essential operating funds in the form of what is now known as the Marilyn Hatza Memorial SHINE grant program. In my role as director of a Maryland Heritage Area, I can speak about how important this funding has been to our ability to serve more partners and generate more impact than ever before. I also have a unique view of the small nonprofits in Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties who need this funding to be able to focus on fulfillment of their missions, which in turn contributes to the tourism economy.

One thing the pandemic taught those of us who work in the intersection of humanities and tourism: our museums, historic sites and other visitor-serving humanities organizations must EXIST to be able to serve the public while contributing to the tourism economy. The pandemic brought about an existential crisis for many, perhaps most, of Maryland's small nonprofit humanities organizations. Some did not survive. Others scaled back mission-based programming because organizational focus was centered on cash flow deficiencies and the basic operating costs. The Hazta Memorial Shine grants have been a lifeline for the recipients, and allowing recipient organizations to do the real work for which they are created, and in which the public trust resides.

Please vote in favor of SB0956. Thank you.

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