



January 30, 2024

Maryland Senate
Senator Brian Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Support of SB 341 - Commission on African American History and Culture - Museum Name Change

Chairperson Feldman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC). I am writing to you today to express MTC's support for Senate Bill 341. The Maryland Tourism Coalition is a trade organization with members representing all areas of tourism in the State of Maryland. Our mission is to support businesses and organizations that cater to the tourism industry through education, networking, and advocacy. As such, MTC asks the committee to vote in favor of this bill.

The Banneker-Douglass Museum is located in Annapolis and has an award-winning partnership with Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, and NTC member and Black History 365 project. The museum is one of the top visitor attractions in Anne Arundel County and is marketed to the 6.8 million visitors who spend \$3.8 billion locally providing \$427 million in state and local taxes and work with the Maryland Office of Tourism to market it to the 43.5 million visitors to the state who spend \$19.4 billion, generating \$2.3 billion in state and local taxes. [Source: Tourism Economics *Economic Impact of Tourism in Maryland 2022* report]

The proposed name change to include Harriet Tubman is appropriate and is right. The name recognizes Maryland-native and renowned Freedom Fighter Harriet Tubman to the name of the State's official museum of African American heritage. The addition of her name to the museum's name highlights her strong connection to her homeland and makes the name of the museum more inclusive by including a woman. It also builds upon the State of Maryland's multi-year major investments to showcase and provide places to learn about Harriet Tubman with the development and marketing of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Park, a partnership with the Maryland State Parks and National Park Service, and the nationally recognized Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Scenic Byway.

The Maryland Tourism Coalition stands alongside the Banneker-Douglass Museum and the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture in its mission to create a more equitable and inclusive society by celebrating the rich tapestry of African American heritage with the addition of Harriet Tubman's name to the Banneker-Douglass Museum. We hope you will support this simple name change that will undoubtedly offer profound and long-term positive impacts. Together, we all can continue to empower communities, amplify underrepresented voices, and inspire future generations to embrace the profound legacy of African Americans in Maryland.



**MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION**

For these reasons, the Maryland Tourism Coalition asks this committee to vote in favor of this legislation and forward it a full vote within the Senate of Maryland.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Libber
Legislative Chair
Maryland Tourism Coalition
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