



February 23, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
House Environment & Transportation Committee

Re: House Bill 1032 – Highways – Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program

Position: *Support*

Chair Korman and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations (MDMO), I am writing to express our support for House Bill 1032 – Transportation – Highways – Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program. House Bill 1032 creates a system of supplemental guide signs to direct motorists to individual tourist attractions across the state. As an organization that is made up of 25 individual jurisdictions including Baltimore City and the Town of Ocean City, we request that priority be given to those jurisdictions that have previously applied for this program and are awaiting direction from State Highway Administration for implementation.

Tourism is an economic ecosystem, delivering opportunity and quality of life for Marylanders that is derived from visitor spending. The travel sector is an integral part of Maryland's economy and contributes over **\$2 billion** in state and local tax revenues a year. Remaining competitive in our regional market is essential to attracting new and repeat visitors to the State. Through the establishment of this program our state's tourist destinations will be showcased along our state highways and scenic byways.

An increased investment in tourism marketing equals an increase in state and local tax revenue, jobs, and economic impact. We respectfully request a favorable report and thank you for your dedicated support to the tourism industry.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cassandra M. Vanhooser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C' and a stylized 'V'.

Cassandra Vanhooser, Chair

Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations