

BENJAMIN BROOKS
Legislative District 10
Baltimore County

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Energy Subcommittee

Chair, Joint Electric Universal
Service Program Workgroup



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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT OF SB804
Northwest Baltimore County Sports Tourism Facility – Feasibility Study
Finance
February 27, 2024

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you on SB804, Northwest Baltimore County Sports Tourism Facility – Feasibility Study. The purpose of this bill is to require the Maryland Stadium Authority to conduct a feasibility study for a state-of-the-art sports tourism facility at Reisterstown Regional Park in Northwest Baltimore County. Specifically, the Stadium Authority will identify the infrastructure needs for the enhancement of current facilities at the Reisterstown Sportsplex like their indoor ice hockey rink, indoor soccer fields, and outdoor playing fields. Moreover, the Authority will also study the potential construction of open space and parks around the facility, find funding resources and identify the facility's impact on local employment and tax revenues.

A revamped sports tourism facility in Northwestern Baltimore County would have immense impacts on the community's character and revitalization. According to SportsETA, in 2022, sports tourism was a \$39.7 billion direct impact industry with an expected growth to \$77.5 billion by 2026. Baltimore County has the opportunity to capture a share of this growing market. The strategic location of the proposed facility, with access from three state highways and encompassing 79.5 acres of county-owned land, positions Baltimore County to become a premier destination for sports tourism, health, wellness, and social interaction.

Additionally, a 2017 economic impact study by Lancaster County showed that the Spooky Nook Sports Facility generated \$87.1 million in economic impact and added 1,346 jobs as well as \$28.4 million in labor income. I can envision similar, if not greater, potential for Baltimore County if we allow this proposed facility to be studied.

SB804 represents a forward-thinking approach that promises not only to boost Baltimore County's economy but also to enrich the lives of its citizens through sports and recreation.

For these reasons I am requesting a favorable report on SB804.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Benjamin T. Brooks".

Benjamin Brooks