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MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

SB0764

February 27, 2024

TO: Members of the Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 764 – Arts Incubator Workgroup – Established

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 764.

SB 764 would create a pivotal initiative poised to bolster and enrich our creative arts economy. The arts don't just decorate Maryland; they drive its economic heartbeat and foster a vibrant cultural ecosystem. At the core of this sector's triumphs are our artists, the relentless creators whose innovations and contributions breathe life into our communities.

In Maryland, the arts are not merely a cultural embellishment but a towering economic force. Artists and cultural institutions ignite \$837 million in economic activity each year, propelling eight thousand jobs and contributing \$19.6 million in local and state tax revenues, as highlighted in the Maryland Department of Commerce FY2022 report. These numbers are a testament to the arts' indelible mark on our economy.

Despite their monumental contributions, artists navigate a precarious financial landscape. The artistic journey is fraught with economic volatility, characterized by inconsistent opportunities and the substantial expenses of crafting their art. SB 764 emerges as a beacon of hope, offering a strategic plan to alleviate these financial burdens and to empower our artists with the resources they desperately need.

Support for this bill is an acknowledgement of the cultural significance of our artists and investment in a foundational pillar of Maryland's economic and cultural identity. The Arts Community stands at a juncture where your endorsement can significantly amplify artists' ability to enrich our state's cultural tapestry and stimulate economic prosperity.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 764.