



Maryland DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

HEARING DATE: February 18th at 1:00 PM

BILL NO: HB794

COMMITTEE: Appropriations

POSITION: Support

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: Andrew Wilson (443) 721-6789

TITLE: Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs – Indian Heritage and Culture Grant Program and Fund

BILL ANALYSIS:

HB794 establishes the Indian Heritage Culture Grant Program and Fund and authorizes the governor to annually appropriate up to \$500,000 in support of capital projects that will support grantees in carrying out Indian tribal and cultural activities, the provision of services to Indian tribal communities, and the preservation of buildings, communities and site of historic and cultural importance to the Indian experience in the State. The Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs (MCIA) will partner with the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) in the development and administration of the Program.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

Although more than 120,000 Marylanders indicated Native American or Indigenous ancestry in the 2020 census, many people are unaware of the presence of these peoples throughout Maryland today. The Indian Heritage Cultural Grant Program created by this bill is greatly needed to promote awareness and better understanding of the many historic and contemporary contributions of Maryland's Indian tribal communities. Capital projects supported by the fund will provide economic development opportunities for this historically underserved population and will provide new heritage tourism opportunities in local communities across the state. MDP is in full support of HB 794 and urges a favorable report.