



**NATIONAL ROAD  
HERITAGE  
FOUNDATION**

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Name: Reuben L. Moss, Executive Director

Organization: National Road Heritage Foundation

Issue: SB0980

Position: Favorable

Date: 2/28/2025

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, March 4, 2025

I am writing in support of SB0980, legislation that will open the possibility of a greater share of the restricted Program Open Space fund for the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA). The statute will allow for up to \$12 million to be appropriated for MHAA. Most of the MHAA budget is awarded in grants to nonprofits and government units for projects that contribute to place-based heritage tourism. The impact of MHAA grants is already well documented, and it will grow as the MHAA budget grows.

As Director of the National Road Museum and Boonsboro Trolley Station Museum, my local heritage area is the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area, a nonprofit serving Carroll, Frederick and Washington Counties.

Our two small facilities have greatly benefitted from MHAA grant support through the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area. In December 2024, we opened the only museum in Maryland dedicated entirely to the history and importance of the first federally funded roads project in the United States, The National Road, which is today designated a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road, 170 miles of which is also a Maryland Scenic Byway. In under three months, that museum has already attracted visitors from 6 states. In the previous year, our Boonsboro Trolley Station Museum was updated with several new exhibits to better represent several important local and regional history topics and has itself attracted tours from visitors of several additional states as well as international tourists. Neither of these projects would have been completed without the direct grant support of the MHAA and the confidence which that support instills in other sponsors.



**P. O. Box 71, Boonsboro, MD 21713**  
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I am proud that we and our parent organization, the National Road Heritage Foundation, with MHAA grant support, have contributed to statewide heritage area program impact: \$2.4 billion in economic contribution, 40,000 jobs supported and sustained, \$320 million in local and state tax revenues generated annually.

When funded under the current statute, up to \$6 million may be budgeted annually for MHAA, with \$5.1 million of that amount available for grants. That's far too little; many worthy projects are unfunded, which means a loss of ROI for local communities and the state. Please support SB2980, which will make way for up to \$12 million in POS funds to be transferred to the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

For the sake of all Marylanders, I hope you will support SB0980.



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