

March 25, 2025

Maryland Senate
The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Written Testimony, HB1523 Howard County - Room Rental Tax - Maximum Rate and Distribution Ho. Co. 18-25.

To the Honorable Senator Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

First and foremost, thank you for your work on one of the most challenging budgeting dilemmas in our time. We know your actions and decisions are made with much deliberation, all in the best interest of our State and the people you serve.

On behalf of the Howard County Tourism Council, Inc. Board of Directors, I respectfully request your support of HB1523 Howard County - Room Rental Tax - Maximum Rate and Distribution Ho. Co. 18-25.

Howard County Tourism Council, Inc. is a community organization with members representing all areas of tourism in Howard County. Our mission is to serve Howard County tourism businesses and organizations through effective marketing that showcases all of Howard County to induce tourism spending.

Tourism plays a vital role in Howard County's economic landscape, driving revenue for small businesses, restaurants, entertainment venues, and cultural attractions. By increasing the hotel tax, this bill will provide essential funding to promote our county as a premier destination, attracting more visitors, generating increased spending, and ultimately benefiting our local economy. Investing in tourism marketing has a proven return on investment. Other jurisdictions that have implemented similar measures have experienced growth in hotel occupancy, higher spending at local businesses, and increased tax revenues that support public services. A dedicated funding stream for tourism promotion ensures that Howard County remains competitive with neighboring destinations, safeguarding jobs and economic opportunities for residents.

I urge you and your colleagues to support this bill and help strengthen Howard County's tourism industry.

Respectfully submitted,



Amanda Hof
Executive Director, Howard County Tourism Council, Inc.