



January 17, 2024

The Honorable Delegate C.T. Wilson, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
230 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB50 - Electronic Payment Transactions - Interchange Fees - Calculation and Use of Data

Position: Oppose

Chairman Wilson,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC). On behalf of the members of MTC I am writing to express our opposition to House Bill 29. Tourism is a major part of the Maryland Economy with visitors spending \$20.5 Billion in 2023. The success of our tourism industry is directly tied to the convenience and efficiency of the electronic payment systems that visitors and residents rely on every day. We strongly believe that the provisions outlined in House Bill 29 that require a separation of nearly every electronic payment transaction into multiple parts could negatively affect not only the tourism sector, but also the broader economy.

In 2023, over 45.1 million people visited Maryland's 24 jurisdictions, generating significant economic impact for our local businesses, including hotels, restaurants, shops, and attractions. The majority of these visitors use credit cards for their travel-related purchases, including booking accommodations, dining, and enjoying local experiences. These transactions help support the 190,660 local tourism jobs and contribute directly to the economic vitality of our community.

The credit card reward programs, such as airline miles and travel points, are an important incentive for consumers to visit our area. For many, these rewards make travel more affordable and convenient, and, as a result, they drive visitor spending here in Maryland. In fact, the loyalty programs tied to credit cards and travel-related purchases encourage repeat visits and help bring in new visitors, all of which is critical to the continued growth of our tourism sector.

Requiring the separation of electronic payment transactions into multiple parts, as proposed in HB 29, introduces unnecessary complexity and risk. These changes could disrupt the smooth operation of our existing payment systems, potentially deterring visitors from using their credit cards as they normally would. This bill would require our businesses to operate under separate rules from other jurisdictions and would set us apart, in a negative context, from the neighboring states for which we compete for visitors and their dollars. For all these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report and thank you for your dedicated support to the tourism industry.



**MARYLAND
TOURISM
COALITION**

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Libber
Legislative Chair
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