



January 27, 2025

Maryland House of Delegates  
The Honorable Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair  
Ways and Means Committee  
130 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Informational Letter HB0498 – DECADE ACT

Chairwoman Atterbeary and Members of the Committee,

My name is Matt Libber, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland Tourism Coalition (MTC). Maryland Tourism Coalition is a trade organization with members representing all areas of tourism in the State of Maryland. Our mission is to support businesses and organizations that cater to the tourism industry through education, networking, and advocacy. I am writing to bring attention to a critical oversight in the proposed DECADE Act currently under consideration in the Maryland Legislature. While the bill aims to address important economic and developmental priorities, it is concerning that tourism—an essential pillar of Maryland’s economy—is not mentioned at all within the legislation.

Tourism contributes significantly to Maryland’s financial well-being, supporting more than 190,000 jobs and generating substantial revenue for local businesses, hotels, restaurants, and cultural institutions. In 2023 alone, tourism brought in \$20.5 billion in direct spending, supporting small businesses and enhancing community development across the state. Tourism spending also generated \$2.4 billion in tax revenue for the State and local governments and saved every Maryland household \$1,027 of tax burden. From the historic sites of Annapolis to the scenic beauty of the Eastern Shore, tourism drives economic activity that benefits every corner of Maryland.

The absence of any reference to tourism in the DECADE Act could have unintended consequences. Without clear acknowledgment or support within the legislation, the tourism sector risks being excluded from potential funding opportunities and developmental initiatives that could enhance infrastructure, marketing, and local engagement. This exclusion could inadvertently hinder the growth of an industry that plays a vital role in Maryland’s economic health and cultural vibrancy.

I urge lawmakers to recognize the importance of the tourism sector by including it explicitly within the DECADE Act. Doing so would ensure that Maryland’s tourism industry continues to thrive and contribute to the broader goals of economic development and community enrichment. Tourism is economic development and is proven investment by the State. For every \$1 of tourism marketing spent, it returns \$34 back to the State and local governments in tax revenue.



**MARYLAND  
TOURISM  
COALITION**

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I am available to discuss this further and would appreciate any opportunity to collaborate on ensuring that tourism remains a central focus in Maryland's legislative priorities.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Libber  
Legislative Chair  
Maryland Tourism Coalition  
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