



Raising the curtain on opportunity.

February 9, 2026

Testimony in support of Senate Bill 440
(Income Tax – Theatrical Production Tax Credit – Sunset Extension)

To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair

Maryland’s Theatrical Tax Credit has made an immense difference in the ability of the Hippodrome Foundation (HFI) to provide free access to National Touring Broadway for thousands of Maryland youth over the past four years. Shows that have been built and launched from the Hippodrome Theatre have each agreed to allow HFI to invite 900 students to come enjoy their final dress rehearsal. The HFI education team invites students who might not have access to Broadway and for more than half the students who participate, the dress rehearsal is their first experience seeing a show. Reactions from our student audiences are *overwhelming*, and we invite students from many different counties to be a part of this opportunity. Most recently, for **GREAT GATSBY** (on January 30th), students from five counties were invited. With the Theatrical Tax Credit in place, students have enjoyed **THE WIZ, LIFE OF PI, & JULIET, ANNIE, PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, WATER FOR ELEPHANTS GREAT GATSBY**....Hosting dress rehearsals is the only way that we could share these shows with more than 6,000 students.

The benefit for each and every student that gets to participate is substantial.

Benefits of extending the tax credit and allowing the Hippodrome Foundation to continue sharing Broadway with Maryland young people:

- Providing a special life experience for thousands of Maryland students who would otherwise not get the chance to experience Broadway.
- Ignite creativity and interest in the performing arts industry with this unique exposure. Many/most touring cast members decide to pursue performing arts after experiencing a student matinee and there are many other career opportunities that are evident during the matinee – sound, lights, costuming, stage crew....these experiences are the beginning for many of the experts that visit the Hippodrome Theatre.
- Exposure to world class performing arts right here in Maryland.

As a home of National Touring Broadway in Maryland, the Hippodrome Theatre welcomes many premier Broadway shows. But it is only the shows that are built and launched in the Hippodrome Theatre that do dress rehearsals. Other shows pull into the loading dock Tuesday and open Tuesday night, with no rehearsals at all.

I ask that you please extend the Maryland Theatrical Tax Credit so HFI can continue to provide this wonderful opportunity for Maryland students.

Thank you.

Olive Waxter, President

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416 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Phone: 410.727.7787
Fax: 410.727.7783
HippodromeFoundation.org