

January 17, 2026

The Honorable Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
Annapolis, MD

**Support for Senate Bill 41 – Commissioned Public Art: Artist Rights and Registration of Art**

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee,

As a career arts professional with over 30 years of experience representing, exhibiting, and building scholarship around culturally significant artworks and their makers, I write to express my strong support for Senate Bill 41 (SB 41). This legislation is an essential step in safeguarding the integrity of public art and the rights of the artists who create it.

Public art has the power to shape communities, foster dialogue, and inspire future generations. It enriches the quality of life, supports economic growth, strengthens civic engagement, and reflects the histories and identities of our neighborhoods. When we speak of artists' rights and intellectual property, we sometimes denude the conversation of the deeply personal nature of creation—reducing it to labor rather than the birthing of objects that reflect, share space with, and bear witness to the humanity around them. Public art is a vital record of our cultural and historical moment—linking us across differences and leaving lasting legacies for generations to come.

SB 41 addresses a critical issue: at times, public art in Maryland has been altered without the artist's consent, undermining both their rights and the public's investment in these works. When artists are forced to waive protections or give up copyright under the federal Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) in state-funded commissions, the integrity of the work—and its cultural and historical significance—is compromised. This legislation ensures that Maryland respects the rights of artists while protecting the public interest, preserving state-supported artworks in their intended form.

Importantly, SB 41 is narrowly tailored: it applies only to contracts with state-funded entities, and allows for review by the Attorney General, with guidance from experts in the field in cases where unforeseen circumstances may arise.

By supporting SB 41, the Senate affirms that Maryland values the contributions of artists, and recognizes their right to safeguard the vision, intent, and integrity of their work. When artists are empowered to protect their creations, they can continue producing meaningful work without fear of alteration or destruction. The public, in turn, experiences art as it was intended—thoughtfully authentic, astutely complete, and justly dignified.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 41. This legislation is vital to ensuring that public art continues to flourish in Maryland, while honoring the rights, dignity, and legacy of the artists who bring it into being.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Amy Eva Raehse

Partner & Executive Director at Goya Contemporary & Goya-Girl Press  
Owner of The Artist Legacy Project  
Public Art Commissioner for the City of Baltimore  
Executor of the Joyce J. Scott Art Trust & Archives  
Director of the Elizabeth Talford Scott Art Estate  
Art Dealers Association of America Member and Membership Committee Advisor  
Board of Trustees at International Fine Print Dealers Association (IFPDA)  
Board of Trustees at IFPDA Foundation  
Board of Trustees Emeritus at Creative Alliance of Baltimore  
University of Maryland Global Campus Art Advisory Board  
Maryland Art Place Program Advisory Council  
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