



Maryland General Assembly Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Hearing: SB818, State Center - Development – Contract, Plan Requirements, and Advisory Group
Position: Supportive

March 2, 2026

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

On behalf of the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO), I am writing to affirm our support behind Senate Bill 818, legislation establishing and defining the purpose of a newly formed State Center Advisory Group.

The BSO's owned home in Baltimore City since 1982, the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall (the Meyerhoff) and our surrounding campus in the 40th District (including the shuttered Cathedral Garage; the neighboring parking facilities currently serving BSO patrons, musicians and staff; and public transportation including Light Rail services at Cultural Center) is immediately adjacent to State Center.

With generous investments in the 2023-2027 Capital Budgets (enacted and proposed), the BSO together with the Baltimore Symphony Endowment Trust (BSET) has embarked on the first major renovations of the Meyerhoff in its 40+ year history. Furthermore, we are actively exploring the demolition and mixed-use redevelopment of the now shuttered Cathedral Garage, to better serve the BSO's operational needs (including education and community spaces), to better serve more neighbors (including the Lyric, the University of Baltimore, the University of Maryland [Mid-town Campus], MICA, MedChi, and the Greek Church), and to generally strengthen the neighborhood as a desired place for more residents and visitors. Our goals will only be successful with strategic planning and coordination with those organizations leading two of the largest redevelopment projects in the City, also home in the 40th district: Baltimore's Penn Station (an 8-minute walk from the Meyerhoff in one direction) and State Center (an 8-minute walk from the Meyerhoff in the other direction).

Just as we have had initial conversations with Redgate regarding our interests (and known challenges) in a State Center traffic survey inclusive of the greater neighborhood, we would greatly appreciate the opportunity to have a representative on this new Advisory Group to ensure the BSO – alongside our peers and neighbors – can provide helpful community input on the State's plans. Equally helpful, we believe such a Group will also help to ensure our own Meyerhoff campus redevelopment plans are informed by greater neighborhood planning.

Sincerely,

Allison Burr-Livingstone
SVP and Chief Advancement & Communications Officer
Baltimore Symphony Orchestra

BSOMUSIC.ORG

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