

SENATE BILL 734

R1

3lr1612
CF 3lr1450

By: **Senator Zucker**

Introduced and read first time: February 6, 2023

Assigned to: Finance

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Transportation – Highways – Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program; requiring
4 the State Highway Administration, in collaboration with the Department of
5 Commerce, to administer the program and establish an Eligibility Committee to
6 review attraction applications; requiring the Administration to conduct a certain
7 investigation on signing feasibility and prepare a signing plan if the Eligibility
8 Committee approves an attraction’s application; requiring the Department of
9 Commerce to review a signing plan for approval; requiring the Administration to
10 install each sign included in an approved signing plan; and generally relating to the
11 Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program.

12 BY adding to

13 Article – Transportation

14 Section 8–755 to be under the new part “Part VIII. Tourist Area and Corridor
15 Signage Program”

16 Annotated Code of Maryland

17 (2020 Replacement Volume and 2022 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Transportation**

21 **8–753. RESERVED.**

22 **8–754. RESERVED.**

23 **PART VIII. TOURIST AREA AND CORRIDOR SIGNAGE PROGRAM.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **8-755.**

2 (A) THERE IS A MARYLAND TOURIST AREA AND CORRIDOR SIGNAGE
3 PROGRAM.

4 (B) THE PURPOSE OF THE PROGRAM IS TO CREATE A SYSTEM OF
5 SUPPLEMENTAL GUIDE SIGNS TO DIRECT MOTORISTS TO ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL
6 ATTRACTIONS BY DIRECTING THE MOTORISTS FIRST TO GROUPS OF ATTRACTIONS.

7 (C) THE ADMINISTRATION, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT
8 OF COMMERCE, SHALL:

9 (1) ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM; AND

10 (2) ESTABLISH AN ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE TO REVIEW ATTRACTION
11 APPLICATIONS.

12 (D) (1) (I) THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE SHALL DEVELOP
13 STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES FOR DETERMINING THE ELIGIBILITY OF AN
14 ATTRACTION FOR SIGNING.

15 (II) IF THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE APPROVES AN
16 ATTRACTION'S APPLICATION, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL INVESTIGATE WHETHER
17 THERE IS SPACE AVAILABLE TO SIGN FOR THE ATTRACTION.

18 (III) SIGNING IS SUBJECT TO SPACE AVAILABILITY BASED ON
19 ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS.

20 (2) (I) IF THE ADMINISTRATION DETERMINES THAT SIGNING IS
21 FEASIBLE, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL PREPARE A SIGNING PLAN FOR THE
22 DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO REVIEW.

23 (II) IN REVIEWING A SIGNING PLAN, THE DEPARTMENT OF
24 COMMERCE MAY CONSULT WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES AND OFFICES.

25 (3) (I) IF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE APPROVES A SIGNING
26 PLAN, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL INSTALL EACH SIGN INCLUDED IN THE SIGNING
27 PLAN.

28 (II) AN APPLICANT AND THE PROGRAM SHALL SHARE EQUALLY
29 THE COSTS OF CONSTRUCTING AND INSTALLING EACH SIGN INCLUDED IN A SIGNING
30 PLAN.

1 **(E) (1) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,**
2 **TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SIGNING, AN ATTRACTION SHALL, AT A MINIMUM:**

3 **(I) PROVIDE RECREATIONAL, HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, OR**
4 **LEISURE ACTIVITIES TO THE PUBLIC;**

5 **(II) BE PRIMARILY A NONRETAIL ATTRACTION, WITH NOT MORE**
6 **THAN 20% OF THE INTERIOR SQUARE FOOTAGE OF THE ATTRACTION DEVOTED TO**
7 **RETAIL SALES;**

8 **(III) BE OPEN TO RANDOM DAILY VISITATION WITHOUT**
9 **ADVANCED RESERVATIONS OR A REQUIRED EXTENDED ATTENDANCE;**

10 **(IV) IN DESIGNATED URBAN AREAS, MEET MINIMUM VISITOR**
11 **ATTENDANCE MEASURES ESTABLISHED BY THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE;**

12 **(V) BE OPEN AT LEAST:**

13 1. **5 HOURS PER DAY;**

14 2. **4 DAYS PER WEEK, INCLUDING SATURDAY OR**
15 **SUNDAY;**

16 3. **25 HOURS PER WEEK; AND**

17 4. **8 MONTHS EACH YEAR;**

18 **(VI) 1. PUBLISH A BROCHURE OR HOST A WEBSITE THAT**
19 **PROVIDES THE ATTRACTION'S HOURS OF OPERATION; AND**

20 2. **POST THE HOURS OF OPERATION AT THE**
21 **ATTRACTION LOCATION, CONSISTENT WITH THE HOURS OF OPERATION PUBLISHED**
22 **IN ITS BROCHURE OR APPEARING ON ITS WEBSITE;**

23 **(VII) PROVIDE PUBLIC ACCESS TO ONSITE RESTROOMS, WATER,**
24 **TELEPHONES, AND PARKING;**

25 **(VIII) PROVIDE AN INTERPRETER OR GUIDE, PRINTED**
26 **SELF-GUIDED TOUR, OR INTERPRETATIVE SIGNING DURING ALL HOURS OF**
27 **OPERATION; AND**

28 **(IX) MEET FEDERAL AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**
29 **REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSIBILITY.**

1 **(2) (I) THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE MAY APPROVE AN**
2 **ATTRACTION THAT DOES NOT MEET ALL OF THE REQUIREMENTS UNDER**
3 **PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION IF THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE**
4 **DETERMINES THAT THE ATTRACTION IS IMPORTANT TO THE STATE OR LOCAL**
5 **ECONOMY.**

6 **(II) A DESTINATION APPROVED IN ACCORDANCE WITH**
7 **SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE LISTED ON THE PROGRAM'S**
8 **WEBSITE.**

9 **(III) THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE MAY WAIVE THE**
10 **REQUIREMENT THAT AN ATTRACTION BE OPEN AT LEAST 8 MONTHS EACH YEAR FOR**
11 **SEASONAL ATTRACTIONS.**

12 **(F) (1) TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SIGNING, AN ATTRACTION MAY NOT, BASED**
13 **ON A DETERMINATION BY THE ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE, ALREADY BE**
14 **WELL-SIGNED ON A TOURIST AREA CORRIDOR.**

15 **(2) THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES OF ATTRACTIONS ARE ELIGIBLE**
16 **FOR SIGNING WITH GENERIC SYMBOLS APPROVED FOR USE:**

17 **(I) VISITOR CENTERS;**

18 **(II) GOLF COURSES;**

19 **(III) ANTIQUES ROWS;**

20 **(IV) MARINAS;**

21 **(V) WINERIES;**

22 **(VI) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION,**
23 **BREWERIES; AND**

24 **(VII) ANY ADDITIONAL CATEGORY IDENTIFIED BY THE**
25 **ELIGIBILITY COMMITTEE.**

26 **(3) THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**
27 **SHALL DETERMINE THE GENERIC SYMBOL AND CRITERIA FOR BREWERY**
28 **ELIGIBILITY IN CONSULTATION WITH A GEOGRAPHICALLY DIVERSE SET OF**
29 **COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING:**

- 1 **(I) STATE LEADERS IN THE BREWING INDUSTRY;**
- 2 **(II) LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS;**
- 3 **(III) LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICIALS; AND**
- 4 **(IV) LEADERS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.**

5 **(G) FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE IN THE**
6 **ANNUAL BUDGET BILL AN APPROPRIATION OF \$350,000 TO THE PROGRAM.**

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
8 October 1, 2023.