



March 15, 2022

Delegate Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Appropriations Committee
121 Taylor House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Madam Chair:

I am writing on behalf of the Southern Maryland Blue Crabs to voice our support for **HB 897 – Sports Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022**. The Sports Entertainment Facilities Financing Fund proposed by the bill would provide tremendous aid to our ballpark. The Blue Crabs’ stadium is now thirteen years old and in need of many repairs. Currently, the Blue Crabs have the only professional ballpark in Maryland that has not received any state grants or financial support since it was built in 2008. These matters have been further complicated by the global pandemic which saw a full year of lost revenue for the ballpark.

Despite the difficulties, the Blue Crabs stayed involved in the community. The stadium served as a dedicated Covid-19 testing and mass vaccination site. We also created a “Community Showcase Summer” with 92 summer events that was hosted in 2020 including:

- Blue Crabs Youth Baseball Camps (with over 700 kids registered), movie nights, and youth baseball;
- food banks;
- regional toys-for-tots holiday distribution;
- American Red Cross Blood Drive; and
- virtual book readings for school children among other activities.

The Blue Crabs have since returned to the field, but we want to ensure that our stadium can support both the future of our team and the community. The Southern Maryland Blue Crabs are hopeful that the funds proposed in this bill will allow us to repair, renovate, and build out our stadium for the future. We look forward to supporting our team and our community to make our ballpark a centerpiece for Southern Maryland.

Thank you for your time and your dedication to the State of Maryland and we respectfully request a favorable report on **HB 897 – Sports Entertainment Facilities Act of 2022**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Lavoie".

John Lavoie