

COURTNEY WATSON
Legislative District 9B
Howard County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Oversight Committee on Pensions

Vice Chair, Transportation
and the Environment



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 28, 2023

HB-674 Maryland Historic Trust - Historic Preservation Partnership Program and Fund

SPONSOR: Delegate Courtney Watson

POSITION: Favorable

Chairman Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang, & members of the Appropriations Committee,

I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 674, which will ensure that the currently underutilized Historic Preservation Loan Program can be used effectively to help further fund important preservation efforts here in Maryland.

As this Committee knows – the laws and programs we pass here in the General Assembly are only as good as they are able to be executed by the different Departments or Agencies that oversee them – and the Historic Preservation Loan Program is no different. Due in large part to bureaucratic hurdles and other difficulties, Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) has been unable to fully utilize the Historic Preservation Loan to its full potential.

The legislation as drafted was introduced to abolish the loan fund and transition it into the Partnership Program and Fund to be operated by a qualifying non-profit organization – with the underlying goal being that the nonprofit will be more efficient in getting money out the door. After meeting with both MHT and Preservation Maryland, we have found a solution that satisfies both parties.

The amendment will keep the Loan Program active and instead authorize MHT to make an expenditure to a “Qualifying Non-Profit” as defined in the bill to facilitate preservation dollars getting out the door more efficiently.

I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 674 as amended. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Courtney Watson

Delegate Courtney Watson
Howard County District 9B