

Favorable - HB741/SB804 Northwest Baltimore County
Sports Tourism Facility – Feasibility Study

Written Testimony

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Executive Director

Good afternoon Chair, Vice Chair and honorable committee members, I am Terrance Hasseltine, Executive Director of the Maryland Sports Commission and I appreciate the opportunity to provide this written Letter of Support for HB741/SB804 Northwest Baltimore County Sports Tourism Facility – Feasibility Study.

For more than 15 years, I have had the honor and pleasure of overseeing and directing the State's sports tourism efforts. Our office has been extremely successful generating hundreds of millions of dollars in direct spending on Maryland's economy throughout the years and during some of the toughest economic and emotional times in our Nation's history.

Our success is the result of the continued growth and expansion of existing events, facilities and the recruitment of new organizations and opportunities to the state. We have been successful in landing events of all sizes and scope in large part due our ability to showcase why Maryland, through our TEAM Maryland partnership, is the right fit for their events. This said, our ability to showcase Baltimore County has been limited over the years due to limited access and limited availability of quality facilities. The competition for these events continues to get more competitive and the quality of the venues continues to get greater.

Our efforts through sports tourism have always been and will always be for the **greater good of Maryland** and our partners across this great State. Knowing the potential for sports tourism growth in Baltimore County has a huge upside, however the facilities have to meet the ever growing demand locally, regionally and in some cases nationally. During FY23, the Maryland Sports Commission was involved in over 350 events which generated over \$198 million in direct spending in the state and we would like to aid Baltimore County in getting their share of this ever growing industry.

HB 741 and SB804: Requiring the Maryland Stadium Authority to conduct a certain feasibility study for developing, establishing, and operating a sports tourism facility at Reisterstown Regional Park in northwest Baltimore County; requiring the Authority to

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consult with certain governments, stakeholders and entities; and requiring the Authority to submit a report of its findings, conclusions, and recommendations to certain committees of the General Assembly by July 1, 2025; is a step in the right direction.

The highlights of the bill are simple:

- Allows Baltimore County a tool to **assess** facility demands, growth and opportunities
- Allows Baltimore County to potentially **grow** within the sport tourism industry
- Allows Baltimore County to evaluate the potential opportunities for **more revenue generation** through sports tourism
- Allows the Maryland Sports Commission to collaborate with Baltimore County at a higher level to **foster, sustain and strengthen** our well-earned reputation through and within sports tourism industry

The Maryland Stadium Authority feasibility study through the approval of HB741/SB804 will benefit the leadership of the State and county to make the determination on developing a sports tourism facility in Northwest Baltimore County. HB741/SB804 creates an exploratory opportunity and methodology for stakeholders to assess the potential so we can succeed in the pursuit and fiscal endeavors around sports tourism.

As you know, the Maryland Stadium Authority has overseen a multitude of feasibility studies on various proposals for sports, entertainment, and public assembly facilities, including several sports tournament facilities. We treasure our reputation for unbiased, independent analysis, and our reputation for on-time, on-budget project delivery. Should this bill pass and we oversee this work, we will work with the same diligence we apply to any study or project with which we are entrusted. We're here to serve.

For the reasons expressed in this letter, the Maryland Sports Commission, requests a favorable report on HB741/SB804 Northwest Baltimore County Sports Tourism Facility – Feasibility Study and I am available for any questions the committee may have.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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