

2022 MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

MARYLAND TOURISM COALITION

The legislative session ended on April 11th, 2022. The session was very intense for many legislators because of redistricting and this year falling on an election cycle. Throughout the Governor, the Legislature and the Court of Appeals could not agree on the new district maps. Finally, a compromise was reached. The primary election will be held July 19th and the general election will be held on November 8th.

In addition to the final tracking sheet, below please find a summary of the bills we thought were most important to you.

I. **PASSED BILLS:** The descriptions below summarize the bills as passed.

HB300/ SB290 – Budget Bill

Final Status: Passed

The 2023 Budget Bill appropriated \$51,601,344 to the Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts. The Office of Tourism Development General Fund Appropriation was \$5,044,819, however \$1,100,000 of that must go to the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore and to Visit Baltimore for wayfinding signs in connection with specific black culture museums and institutions.

SB 541 – Natural Resources – Great Maryland Outdoors Act

Final Status: Passed

With overwhelming support from 32 Senators and 39 Delegates, it is not surprising that this bill passed the legislature. This bill addressed infrastructure, capacity, and accessibility needs within the Maryland Park Service and State Parks. The purpose of the bill was to establish the Parks and Recreation Commission in the Department of Natural Resources to provide oversight of the Maryland Park Services. This bill passed the Senate with seven floor amendments, then passed the House bill concurring on all seven amendments.

We supported this bill with amendments.

HB 558/ SB 489 – Agritourism Definition

Final Status: Passed

This bill alters the definition for “agritourism” to specifically include camping and incidental outdoor stays. A local jurisdiction may adopt the definition of “agritourism” as defined in this bill to legislate and regulate local businesses that offer such activities.

This simple bill passed with no amendments and is currently awaiting the Governor’s signature.

II. BILLS THAT DIED: The descriptions below summarize the bills as they were introduced.

HB 1273 – Income Tax Credit for Travel, Hospitality, and Entertainment

Final Status: Failed

This was our proactive bill. It would have established a tax credit that would have permitted an individual to claim such a tax credit for travel, lodging, and hospitality related expenses paid in the State of Maryland during the taxable years 2022 and 2023.

A version of this bill was introduced in the 2021 Legislative Session but was quickly discounted due the multi-million dollar fiscal note. This session our team worked with MTC to introduce an amended version of the bill which included a much more reasonable fiscal note. We sought out numerous sponsors from different geographical regions to sponsor this bill in order to show wide ranging support for this bill. We also lobbied the Chairs of the Ways and Means Committee and members of MTC testified in the hearing. The bill ultimately died in the committee and never was voted on.

HB238/ SB 343 State Designations – State Spirit – Maryland Rye

Final Status: Failed

This bill designated Maryland Rye Whiskey as the State Spirit. Neither the House bill nor the Senate bill passed the first reading in either committee.