

Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
03/30/2023 14:50:39	Melissa Reagan	Gambrills	21054	No	Arundel High School Color Guard	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Good Evening! I am the director of the Arundel High School Color Guard. We are a scholastic organization for middle and high school students that doesn't receive a single penny in support from the Board of Ed or the school. We have to pay for costumes, equipment, transportation, competition fees, etc. The largest part of our budget is transportation! If you're not aware, school buses are VERY expensive. To hire one for a single day, it can cost us \$700-\$900 and we have to do that multiple times per season. We've been lucky enough to be able to volunteer two days per season for approximately 15 years at the Renaissance festival. The funds we receive from those two dates makes up a large portion of our income and prevents us from having to charge the kids a fee that makes it unaffordable to participate. Even still, I find myself looking for sponsors for students and/or paying for things out of my own pocket for them. In the event the Renaissance Festival couldn't happen, it would cause the Arundel High School Color Guard to fold completely. There's no way we could possibly or reasonably make up the funds needed to operate. I've been coaching the Color Guard for 24 years and I'm pleading with you to not pass this bill that would endanger the Renaissance Festival's ability to operate and thus the future of the Arundel Color Guard.	
03/30/2023 15:48:18	Mark Goldfarb	woodstock	12498	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	May it please the COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND. My name is Mark Goldfarb. I own and operate Catskill Mountain Moccasins Located in Woodstock Ny. My company has been exhibiting at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for nearly 30 years. The Maryland Renaissance festival is one of the top renaissance festivals in the country of which there are well over one hundred. Being a superior event, it contributes a great deal to my annual income, and those whom I employ, and I know that this is the case for many, if not all the artisans who come from all of the USA to participate in this event. It is no easy task to be at the top of the list in terms of the quality of the festival. There is one simple reason that this festival is at the top of this list, and that reason is that the Smith family who own and manage the festival care greatly about every single aspect of operating this festival. I have known Jules Smith personally for all the years I have been there, and I have never seen someone so dedicated to their work as Jules. Nothing escapes his attention. Especially when it comes to public safety, adherence to county and state regulations and ensuring that all parties involved follow methods and procedures to the letter of the law. As you are aware the Maryland Renaissance festival draws fantastic crowds to the 9-weekend event each year. This fact creates tax revenue that adds to the county's resources and allows Anne Arundel County to use these funds year-round from an event that only occurs for 19 days. In other words, fantastic returns for the county for little investment of county funds. The festival pays for and provides police and emergency personal at their own cost. This ensures the safety of all who attend and the orderly operation of the festival. In consideration of all these facts and that the festival has been a good neighbor, solid business and a valued member of Anne Arundel County it would seem fair that the an amendment to this bill be added to protect the festival from cancellation by the County due to conflicting events being held at the same time or for reasons other than the festival not complying with existing rules and regulations that currently the festival operates under. Tens of thousands of residents of Maryland and the surrounding states look forward to the nine weekends in the fall when the Maryland Renaissance Festival opens. I humbly ask that you consider my testimony and ensure that the Maryland Renaissance Festival be allowed to operate without the chance of cancellation for reasons that could be cited in the proposed special event bill 13-23. Thank you for consideration of my testimony. Respectfully, Mark Goldfarb	
03/30/2023 16:08:47	Jerome "Skip" King	Pilot	24138	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	The Maryland Renaissance Festival is the most respected and best run in the country. The administration is responsive to patrons, participants, and is a valued member of the community. As an indication of our commitment to MDRF we made \$38,000 of product, \$4,000 in displays, and purchased a \$26,000 Casita travel trailer for four weeks at the faire. We are but two of hundreds of artisans, vendors, entertainers, support, and administrative staff, who make this event a marvelous entertainment experience for 300,000 attendees each year. We hope the council will continue to recognize the economic and social value of the Renaissance Festival to Anne Arundel County and Maryland. Skip King, Elizabeth Paule	
03/30/2023 17:27:40	David Spurlock	Titusville	32796	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	3/30/2023 David Spurlock The Brass Dragon I am a craftsman at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. It has been my privilege and honor to be a part of this highly popular event for 30 years now. It serves as a major portion of my yearly income and would be a devastating loss should the festival not be allowed to continue. Whereas I suspect that this proposed bill is not specifically designed to target this show, the wording of it allows for this to happen in the future. The festival has already been approved as a special exception in zoning. Please save the livelihoods of all these wonderful people who bring their handmade AMERICAN MADE art and crafts to the community and allow this festival to be grandfathered in this bill. The Smith family has always been very conscious of the surrounding community, and they go the extra mile to make the impact of the show as livable as possible to the affected neighbors. When the show opened in Crownsville some 38 years ago, the surrounding community was much smaller. Now with the neighborhood growing, the potential exists for the community to bring pressure on the county to eliminate our show. The wording of the bill as it stands allows for this. Please take my concerns to heart when penning the final draft. I'm sure I don't need to remind you of how much revenue this show brings to this community. Its loss would not only affect the livelihood of the Smiths, the artists, the crafts people, the permanent office staff, the food venders, performers and musicians but all the surrounding businesses that provide food, drink and services to keep the show running. The show also brings visitors from all over the country and beyond. These folks spend money and not just at the festival. Many need lodging and meals, many take advantage of the sights and businesses at the Annapolis harbor area. Thank you for your consideration. David Spurlock	
03/30/2023 17:50:43	Todd Silber	SOUTH WINDS	6074	Yes	Warlords Crusade Leather	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	To whom it may concern, thank you for receiving this letter. Like many I am sure you are aware that his festival is an over whelming majority of my yearly income. But its also provides so much more, the entertainment for people. The history for Children that come to the Maryland Renaissance Festival. The knowledge, getting away from video games. The fair is livelihood for many folks. It is the artisans life we chose. At 46 years old, and only a GED education. There were no other options for me to make a decent income. A income that gave my 2 daughters the opportunity to go to college. My hands and livelihood have gone into my craft. Maryland Renaissance Festival allows this craft to be seen by so many. Educate, historical value, and provide a income for me and my family. Please reconsider on why a bill would be passed that could deny this fair from operating. 1000's of Artisans and Employees need this show. 10's of Thousands more come for to be entertained and educated. The business it must drive for the community? The tax dollars must generate a substantial income for the State of Maryland. (Sales tax from 100's of vendors) let alone any other admission, sales, or income tax. I hope this letter had read with the soft tone, and sincerity I wrote it in. Thank you for your time, -Todd Silber Warlords Crusade Armor www.warlordscrusade.com	
03/30/2023 19:32:47	Anna Marie Wright	Richardsville	22736	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am writing to oppose bill #13-23, this bill has the potential of directly impacting hundreds of people who rely on the Maryland Renaissance Festival (MDRF) for their livelihood in whole or part. As an artisan in the region, MDRF represents well over 50% of my annual income. I work year-round to produce enough pottery for the show and its sudden cancellation would be disastrous for me and the many other artisans who are involved with the show, not to mention the impact on the hundreds of locals who are employed for the event. The bill's ambiguity regarding jurisdiction and enforcement are still glaring after amendments. MDRF is a year-round business in your county, has special zoning approval to and should be grandfathered or excluded from this bill, should it pass. Thank you for your time and consideration.	
03/30/2023 22:00:07	Anwyn Walsh	spencer	47460	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Thank you all for hearing my testimony today in opposition of the bill 13-23a. I write to you from the Arizona Renaissance Festival where I'm currently selling my art. These festivals are a bridge from coast to coast across the country encouraging nationwide tourism and commerce, each individual show being vital in it's position seasonally. I've been working the Maryland Renaissance Festival annually for a decade, it's not just a job it's my career. It provides my family with 35%+ of our annual income. I know for many of our community members, especially our elders, it provides them with 50%-100% of their annual income. As artists, musicians, and performers we are very much dependent on our long standing contracts with shows such as MDRF. The Maryland Renaissance Festival is essential to keeping food in my child's belly to be completely honest. The Festival being unable to obtain it's long standing permits would completely upend my family's life as well as the lives of hundreds of other families who bought homes near the Festival due to their employment therein. The loss of stability in the Festival's ability to maintain long term permits as has been the way since 1980 would be detrimental to local tourism as thousands of people travel from across the country to visit MDRF as it's called "the best Renaissance Festival in the country". At the shows I have done in AZ, MN, CO, WV, NY, NC, I've always heard customers, workers, and business owners say "if only our show was as good as Maryland" because it's a shining jewel and known nation wide for its high quality. We can all agree that the backbone of America is small family owned businesses hundreds of which comprise the Festival. I believe in local government's call to support and encourage small businesses and tourism to the benefit of all constituents. I would hate to have to tell my son that somewhere he has called home for his 7 years of life is no more. Thank you for your time.	
03/31/2023 10:36:35	Kathy Martinez	Berkeley Spring	25411	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	No Position	I'm a sculptor whose only source of income is the Ren Fair. Now, going beyond the personal: The Ren Fair keeps performing arts, music, & visual arts alive . Most venues, especially in the fine arts , have died out in recent years.I don't need to go into details of how many thousand have been employed by this fair, which is the highest quality fair east of the Mississippi.To have its status threatened in any way is really scary.	
03/31/2023 12:52:45	Joseph Victor	Silver City	88061	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am concerned about this proposed bill in that it has the potential to deeply effect my livelihood and that of the four Maryland residents I employ each year to help run my shop. I own a building at the Maryland Renaissance Festival (for 22 years now) that I operate my business from. It is responsible for approximately 85% of my yearly income and support for my family. The bill would require the festival to register yearly and potentially be turned down for a permit for reasons that are vaguely outlined in the bill. The pre-production necessary for my business to participate in the Festival requires 10 months of preparation and 10's of thousands of dollars invested to be ready for a festival that (potentially because of this bill) could be canceled for reasons that have no avenue for appeal. I ask that the bill be withdrawn as written, or that the Maryland Renaissance Festival be excluded from, or grandfathered in to provide immunity to cancellation from this bill. Thank you for your consideration. Joseph Victor	
03/31/2023 14:30:37	Maddock Malys	Germantown	20874	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	No Position	While I understand the need for a uniform permitting process, I am concerned that the Maryland Renaissance Festival might be impacted adversely. MDRF has been in the same location and the same weekends for many years and has already gone through several zoning processes, so I believe it should be grandfathered in. I am a vendor at MDRF and it is 90% of my yearly income, so the possibility that it might be denied, canceled, or truncated without a clear method of appeal is a frightening prospect. Thank you for your time.	
03/31/2023 16:17:58	Carl "Jay" Bansbach	Pasadena	21122	No	Sons of the Severn Barbershop Chorus, Anne Arundel Chapter (J-003), Barbershop Harmony Society	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	No Position		YES
03/31/2023 16:43:38	Petronella Thomann	Crystal Beach	34681	No	Maryland Renaissance Festival	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear Council Members I am writing in regards to Bill 13-23. I am an artisan at the Maryland renaissance festival. I have had two shops there for over forty years. I employee during the festival Five people who have been with me for over fifteen years. They all look forward to this income to supplement them in a variety of ways. This show has helped my family greatly over the years and makes up for 50% of my yearly income. I understand the committee's concerns but we also invest in the local communities and have over the last 40 years. I think the committee may not realize the economic impacts they will have by controlling these events. Many peoples livelihood's are very dependent on them. Please reconsider or exempt permanent events such as the Maryland Renaissance Festival. It will financially devastate many of the artisans there and at other events. Sincerely Petronella Thomann Argenti Jewelry	
03/31/2023 18:35:46	Anna Chaney	Lothian	20711	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Oppose as written. Bill needs to be tabled for proper study of impacts and unintended consequences, ambiguities, government liabilities and deficiencies, and for clarity of intention, purpose, and goals. See my attached testimony for a detailed account of my concerns. This legislation represents an infringement upon inalienable rights and presents a case for negligence.	YES

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03/31/2023 19:18:07	Elizabeth Crawford	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	As a participant of the Maryland Renaissance Festival for the last 10 years, I am writing to ask that you not pass bill 13-23 as written, and consider grandfathering in the faire as opposed to requiring an annual permit. The faire is diligent in meeting and exceeding expectations for health and safety, but this bill has loose and general wording that threatens all events. A bill with so much room for interpretation is worrisome. Our concern comes from this generality. This annual icon could be prevented from opening, because of the room for bias and misinterpretation, and that would break many hearts. Thank you for your consideration.	
04/01/2023 9:47:05	R. Foster Holcombe	Laytonsville	20882	Yes	Art of Fire	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	The Maryland Renaissance Festival is entering its 39th season at its Crownsville location. Over the years, the management which was one of the original generational founders of the Renaissance Festival concept in the late 70s, MD/DC, Northern Virginia (mid-Atlantic) has developed it into a annual event. Over these many years, the management team has worked with many of you at a city, county and state level to work through many issues that have challenged the evolution and growth of many businesses. We feel fortunate to be able to participate with the festival which has benefited our business in many aspects.	
04/01/2023 10:53:02	The Heinen Family	Crystal beach	34681	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear AA County, We are independent artisans who hand make our special custom made coins and medallions at MDRF We hope that AAC will conclude that all positive aspects outweigh others and that you see the advantage of a grandfathered exception for MDRF. We are in our 31st year at MDRF. Many of our supporters are 3rd generation festival lovers whom support a large % of our annual income across at least 3 families, as well as local employees. We see the joy from patrons every year as they revisit! We have a substantial investment in our Shoppe at the faire as well. We hire local talent, local carpenters and spend our income to support local businesses of all types for over 2 months each year. Which brings us to note that MDRF is an important event with cultural ties to AAC's own history. So many American craftsmen, artisans, performers, other participants, crew and the owners of the festival itself are all part of a long term, tight knit happy family. Any disruption to this current arrangement would disrupt the lives of so many people who call AAC their home either all year or ongoing seasonally. Thank you for your consideration in not imposing regulations in bill #13-23a that would restrict MDRF in conducting this annual event. Sincerely, Rick, Barbara, Hans, & Vander The Heinen Family	
04/01/2023 13:44:45	Lawrence D. Wood	Crownsville	21032	Yes	Fantasy Guilde Studio LLC	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am a 20+ year resident of Anne Arundel Co., and a 40 year artisan vendor at the MD Renaissance Festival in Crownsville. I moved here in 2001 to be near that event. I make my entire business income at the festival, and employ many local citizens both year-round in my Crownsville studio and at the festival itself. A rain day severely affects my income by thousands of dollars, which is of course something we can't control. This bill, however, seems to suggest that the county could close or even cancel the festival on a good day or days for vague reasons. It's unclear who specifically has that authority, or what appeal process there might be. As written, the bill is a threat to the operation of the festival, and the lives and incomes of thousands of local and out of state participants. I'd like to either see this bill shelved or voted down, or the MD Renaissance Festival specifically exempted from this bill as a grandfathered entity. Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts. Larry Wood Crownsville	
04/01/2023 14:51:21	Gabriel Quirk	White River Jct	5001	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	The Maryland Renaissance Festival is a beloved cultural asset both to Anne Arundel County and the larger metro region, bringing in 400 thousand people each fall who enjoy the festival and then leave their dollars behind at local restaurants, hotels, and businesses. Similar benefit comes from the hundreds of festival participants who call Annapolis home for two and a half months each year. My small business brings \$5000 in amusement tax(10%) to the State and county. Income from the festival represents more than half my annual income and I am heavily invested in the event, as are several hundred small businesses operating inside the festival. As written, this bill erodes our confidence in the reliability of the event and discourages the continued development and enrichment our festival has championed for 40 years. As written, the festival and all the businesses within it are put at risk by a rule that could be applied capriciously. Please consider upholding the existing status of the renaissance Festival as a special exception in Zoning.	
04/01/2023 16:30:17	Susan Fox	Westminster	80031	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Support	I and my son, Kelly Fox, own a booth and business at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. This festival is responsible for 80% of our income annually to support our family! We are concerned by this zoning and the proposed bill could be used to cancel the renaissance festival for reasons listed near the end and it is not clear who has authority nor is there any remedy or appeal. The festival business operates year-round at the festival grounds preparing, maintain and operating a shop and office employing 10 full time people who would be out of work if the festival could not open, as well as my own business and the shop I own at the festival. Our family has traveled from Colorado for over 40 years to be a part of this wonderful festival.Thanks for hearing us!	
04/01/2023 16:46:06	Kimberly Nicole Cooley	Floyd	24091	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have worked as a sole proprietor with the Maryland Renaissance Festival for the last 30 years. Each year, I often make as much as half my yearly income at the festival. I travel for this purpose each year, spending money in Anne Arundel county on gas, food, and lodging. I urge you not to pass this bill which will not only negatively impact a great many festival workers like myself, but it would also will eliminate the money Anne Arundel County receives from the festival in tax revenues as well as from money spent by us traveling workers. Thank you for your consideration.	
04/01/2023 17:06:38	Thomas W Weigand	Annapolis	21401	No	South County Knights of Columbus	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Our organization has been raising funds at the renaissance festival for many years. The festival is our biggest source of funds, and we rely on the funds to support several local charities which count on our contributions. This is one of our annual main events	
04/02/2023 10:15:14	Linda Demian	Surprise	85374	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	To the Council. It is with extreme concern that I register this testimony. I am a 44 year artist with a booth at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. I travel there from home 2400 miles each way because it is a major percentage of my income and mostly because it is the best show in this country. I am not alone. Fellow artists also come but so does the public. That this proposed bill contains any possible way that the festival could be canceled on a whim would be devastating for all involved. The public that bought tickets, the vendors that invested to get there and bring their art, the loss of joy that the festival brings through the entertainers that travel to it under contract. Please carefully consider the legacy this festival has in your county grandfather it out from any chance this proposed law could threaten its involvement. Thank you.	
04/02/2023 10:46:13	nicodemys carvell	Randallstown	21133	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have been a participant at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for over 26 years and share a passion matched by many of the vendors, booth owners, actors and other participants. I am the owner of a small home improvement company (registered with MHIC) and a small artistic fabrication shop which as of this year I am a vendor/booth owner at the festival. As I get older and become unable to perform home improvement my participation with the festival will become more and more essential to my financial income. I feel that some of the language used in the proposed bill still may be used to not issue the necessary permits for the festival to open and operate to its full capacity. The renaissance festival is a regularly and consistently scheduled event and should be among the excluded event facilities already in the ordinance.	
04/02/2023 12:08:16	Virginia A Virkus	Orrtanna	17353	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am a vendor at the Maryland Renaissance Faire. Dancing Pig Pottery earns approximately 70% of our yearly income from MDRF. We employ between 5 and 10 workers per year, virtually all of them Maryland residents. We pay thousands of dollars in Maryland sales tax annually. We oppose this bill. It is too broad and vaguely worded, and allows too much discretion to the county. It is a direct threat to our livelihood as a small business, and the Maryland residents we employ.	
04/02/2023 14:12:27	Gary Lokken	St. Paul	55102	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	At Royalty Foods, part of the Maryland Renaissance Faire, we employ nearly 100 people every year, many of which are either new to the workforce or returning after being out of work for some time. While this seasonal event is fun, it is also a place of business, and one that takes pride in empowering the community through employment. This would be jeopardized by the possible closure of this faire. We ask that you not pass this bill as written, and consider grandfathering in the Faire as opposed to requiring an annual permit. Thank you.	
04/02/2023 14:30:35	Thomas Bailey	Odenton	21113	No	Page After Page	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Please see our attached testimony regarding the proposed legislation.	YES
04/02/2023 14:35:45	Kathleen Boyland	ljamsville	21754	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am a Maryland small business owner/artist whose art work is sold exclusively from my merchant shop at Maryland Renaissance Festival (MDRF) for thirteen years. MDRF represents a majority of my annual income and losing part or all if it would have a significant financial impact. Knowing the multi-day Special Event will open and close on set dates is critical for art work preparation and procurement of raw materials in advance. Uncertainty of opening or being cancelled on short notice will have an overall negative impact. MDRF operates the business year-round to ensure the proposed bill's permit considerations are exceeded through employment of their own staff in addition to ongoing facilities mgmt. These include but not limited to security, EMTs, adequate toilet facilities, food and beverage facilities, litter control, parking, and points of ingress/egress. They also work with all participants to insure we comply with all State and County fire, electrical, health department, liquor regulations, and inspections. Tickets are purchased online in advance. Cancelling the event with little notice would significantly impact all attendees and MDRF. I believe not opening or limiting the number of days open would have significant negative impact on local and state revenue due loss of applicable food and beverage tax, merchandise sales tax, ticket sales taxes etc. not to mention the surrounding community merchants. MDRF should be grandfathered due prior special zoning exception. Thank you considering my comments as you consider Bill 13-23.	YES
04/02/2023 14:38:55	Gary Lokken	St. Paul	55102	No	Royalty Foods LTD at the Maryland Renaissance Festival	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	At Royalty Foods, part of the Maryland Renaissance Faire, we employ nearly 100 people every year, many of which are either new to the workforce or returning after being out of work for some time. While this seasonal event is fun, it is also a place of business, and one that takes pride in empowering the community through employment. This would be jeopardized by the possible closure of this faire. We ask that you not pass this bill as written, and consider grandfathering in the Faire as opposed to requiring an annual permit. Thank you.	
04/02/2023 15:15:33	Anna Snodgrass	BOWIE	20716-1030	Yes	Lip Messages, LLC	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I own a building at the MD Renaissance Festival and 9 local people manage/run the booth with 3 people who also come in from out of town for the season. The way the bill is written could be used to cancel The Maryland Renaissance Festival with possibly no remedy or appeal. Nearly everyone who works there from the festival staff to the vendors and entertainers prepare year-round for the festival. The vendors making their items, the performers developing new parts or completely new acts, the booth owners updating and improving their booths and hiring staff and much more. Many of them make a majority of their yearly income at this festival. When I look at the MD Renaissance Festival fan boards on social media I see how this festival is the highlight of their year for the attendees. For the weeks before, during & after festival the 100s of vendors from out of town stay in the local hotels and campgrounds bringing revenue to the county businesses by eating at local restaurants, buying building materials from local hardware stores etc. Finally, the MD Renaissance Festival should be excluded or grandfathered because it was already approved as a special exception in zoning.	
04/02/2023 15:29:29	Henry C Torrance	Baltimore	21219	No	Argenti, Inc	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have been attending the MDRF since the early 1990s and have worked there for nearly 20 years. Argenti employs 5 MD residents for the run of the festival, and is a significant source of income for the owner of this family business. The "faire" differs from other seasonal events in that it is a permanent facility, with buildings, kitchens, and the like which are maintained throughout the year, even if only used for 9 weeks. MDRF is a tradition for many families, both local and all over the country. There are generations that have grown up coming to this festival, weddings are held here, such is the attraction and magic of this festival. It provides not only wholesome entertainment for the entire family, craft artisans to purchase from, but also summer income for many local high school and college students, in addition to people such as myself who supplement their annual income and also enjoy the atmosphere that is uniquely MDRF. I urge you to reconsider the wording of the proposed legislation and exclude MDRF as a seasonal type of activity, which it truly is not, given the permanence of the structures comprising the facility. It differs from such activities as the county fair, in that the fairgrounds is home to many other activities through out the year, where as MDRF is a dedicated purpose built "village" which provides the unique experience of a Renaissance Festival.	
04/02/2023 15:37:19	Dario Fermain	ODENTON	21113	No	Odenton Masonic Lodge	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	The Masons of Odenton Lodge #209 Ancient Free and Accepted Masons have been raising funds at the renaissance festival for 5 years. The festival is responsible for 50% of the income annually, excluding dues, to help us fund our mission. Specifically, the funds from the festival has been used to add to the Masonic Charities of Maryland scholarship where we donate \$1500 per selected student from Anne Arundel County schools. Participation in the festival is especially important to our membership because it is another accessible event for our members and family who have disabilities and can't participate in more physically demanding events. Even better, the festival gives us a chance to engage with the community and show them how diverse Maryland Masons are. We look forward to participating in the 2023 Renaissance Festival for some of the best FUNDraising happens in AACo.	

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Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
04/02/2023 15:46:58	Robert Piland	Gainesville	20155	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	My wife and I have operated our business in The Maryland Renaissance Festival since 1993. Over time we have witnessed the event grow and Festival Management learn to control the flow of patrons to reduce strain on area resources. We have seen improvements in operating procedures to ensure the safety of the public and people working there. The owners are committed to making this event a benefit to the community. We hire ten people to work in our shop each season. Most are Maryland and Anne Arundel residents, earning supplemental income for vacations, home improvements, and their families. The money earned working for us is part of their family budgets for the year. Should the Festival be canceled one or more weekends because of event conflicts, they will lose the funds they planned to earn. Personally, the Festival represents 1/3 of our family's annual income. This has allowed me to quit working in a jewelry store doing jewelry repairs to pursue my own art as a goldsmith. Closing the Festival to accommodate other events will cost us a portion of the income we need to fuel our family through the winter months. It would deny us access to customers we do not see at any other event in Maryland during the year. Please grandfather or exclude The Maryland Renaissance Festival and other special events with previous zoning exceptions from this Bill for the sake of those who depend on it for a portion of their livelihood.	
04/02/2023 15:57:45	Francesca Torrance	Sparrows Point	21219	No	Argenti Inc.	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have been attending the MDRF since the 1990s and have worked for the past 18 years at Argenti Jewelers which employs 5 MD residents for the entire festival and is a significant income source for this family owned business. The Faire site is a permanent facility housing kitchens and buildings to oversee the operation all year long. Although the faire runs 9 weeks each year, the staff of MDRF is working year round to ensure the grounds and buildings are kept up and perform any needed maintenance and improvements; this is a year round business. MDRF is a major attraction in the state, receiving visitors from all across the country. Generations of families have grown up coming to MDRF to experience the magic of this festival and purchase unique hand crafted items from artisans. It is also a source of income for local high school and college students who want to be a part of the wonderful atmosphere that is MDRF. I am asking you to reconsider this proposed legislation and do not designate MDRF as a seasonal type of activity as it not due to the permanent structures on the grounds and the year-round activity in maintaining the facility for which it was created, a Renaissance Festival.	
04/02/2023 17:43:37	Diana J Sunday	Bowie	MD	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose		YES
04/02/2023 18:28:57	Michael Sieger	roanoke	24019	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have worked at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for the last 6 years. I have been a patron for the last 30 years. I travel for this purpose each year, including bringing my extended family several times a year. All of us spend money in Anne Arundel county on gas, food, and lodging. I depend upon my income at the festival just like most of the workers and I know many of the booth owners make a majority of their income from the festival. When I talk to customers at the festival or look at the MD Renaissance Festival fan boards on social media I see how this festival is the highlight of their year for the attendees. I urge you not to pass this bill which will not only negatively impact a great many festival workers like myself, but it also will eliminate the money Anne Arundel County receives from the festival in tax revenues as well as from money spent by us traveling workers. However, if Bill #13-23a were to pass, MDRF should be excluded, exempt from its application or grandfathered because it was already approved as a special exception in zoning. Thank you for your consideration.	
04/02/2023 18:45:28	Kenneth Fischer	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear Council Members, I am writing to express my ongoing concerns regarding Bill 13-23, which is currently under consideration by the County Council. As a local resident of Anne Arundel County and a food vendor at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for 35 seasons, I believe this bill could negatively impact not only the Festival but also the livelihoods of many individuals who depend on it. My business provides part-time employment to 10 local workers every year, and hundreds of other local residents are employed by other vendors and the Festival itself. Running a successful seasonal business requires predictable schedules, and unexpected closures or permit revocations would cause a significant negative impact on my business and employees. Many of the other vendors and the Festival itself would be similarly affected. I understand that the bill is intended to prevent safety risks by ensuring that the county can adequately support all scheduled events. However, the Festival has consistently demonstrated the ability to operate with minimal impact on county resources by hiring its own security and emergency medical staff. Furthermore, the Festival was granted a zoning exemption decades ago, which should be considered when evaluating its operations. The Maryland Renaissance Festival has been a cherished tradition for many years, providing a unique cultural experience and economic benefits to the local community. Considering the Festival's history of responsible operation, I respectfully request that you consider amending Bill 13-23 to specifically exempt the Maryland Renaissance Festival. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I appreciate your service to our community. Sincerely, Kenneth Fischer Severn, MD	
04/02/2023 19:19:15	Virginia Leslie Harris	Sedona	86336	Yes	Noblesse Oblige Costumes	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have had a costume business at the Maryland Renaissance Festival for 30 years. I drive there from Arizona and spend almost 3 months every year to sell from my shop at this event, because it is the premier Renaissance festival in the US. I employ as many as 15 local residents who help in selling and making the costumes, and collect thousands of dollars in sales tax each year for the state of Maryland. It is a major effort on my part to participate in this event, and it would be disastrous for me if it was closed for a year because its permit was denied. I am one of hundreds of vendors at this event who count on it to support themselves and their families; for me it provides about 60% of my livelihood. For our customers, the Fair is a hugely anticipated part of their Fall activities, as it has been since 1977. In my experience, the Festival has always provided the public with a safe event and complied with all legal and health requirements. For these reasons, I would respectfully ask the legislature to exempt the Festival from needing to re-apply for permits to operate every year.	
04/02/2023 21:09:33	Terry Blankenship	Prince	25907	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	As a participant of the Maryland Renaissance Festival, the current wording of 13-23a is worrisome. The lack of an appeals process, stated government authority, and quantified definitions makes the bill appear quite subjective. The Maryland Renaissance Festival is considered to be the most well run festival of its type in the country. I have worked fairs across the US, and Maryland is considered the golden standard. The festival provides part time employment to hundreds of Marylanders and brings joy and excitement to the community each year. Since the festival has been at its current location for 38 years, it would make sense to grandfather in this Maryland institution. Thank you for your consideration.	
04/02/2023 22:44:21	Johanna Dun-Jones	Kingston	12401	No	Moresca Clothing & Costume Inc.	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear Council Members, I am writing you again as the owner of a business with a booth at The Maryland Renaissance Festival regarding the bill 13-23. As The Maryland Renaissance festival accounts for almost a third of my business's annual income it takes a huge amount of time and resources to prepare for each year. I am worried that some of the vague language that is outlined in this bill could be used to cancel or shorten the length of a season. I know that for my business and many of the other businesses who participate in this festival, this could have huge negative impact on our livelihoods. I am hoping that you will either cancel this bill or amend it in a way that it no longer threatens the security of this festival, which is beloved by the thousands and thousands of visitors who come every year and is essential to the success of the hundreds of vendors who rely so heavily on these 19 days. This festival truly has the highest reputation across the country among vendors and patrons of Renaissance festivals for being the best, which is a direct tribute to how professionally and thoughtfully it is managed. Please do amend this bill to ensure the festival is secure and to properly recognize the stellar work and incredibly high standard the owners have set and maintained for the last 4 decades, while providing a livelihood for countless businesses and employees.	
04/02/2023 23:01:24	Patricia Lindquist	San Antonio	78259	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I am writing to voice my concern about this bill and the effect it could have on my livelihood. As it is written, the Maryland Renaissance festival could possibly be denied a permit to open, which would be devastating to me and hundreds of workers and thousands of loyal patrons. The festival has operated there for decades, providing a platform for all the artisans and entertainers to make our living. Every shop hires local workers, local companies to service the festival in security, food, maintenance, etc. To think it could be subject to reapply for a permit that could be denied every year after all the permits and zoning it has already acquired would be nervewracking at the very least. Please reconsider the wording, or exempt this event from this particular permitting process. Thank you!	
04/02/2023 23:16:09	Wilson Meloy	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Greetings Council Members, I am a resident of the county as well as a merchant at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. Being a disabled veteran, this festival is the only one I actively work as it is right across the street from me, and it accounts for almost 80% of my annual income and assists the livelihood of my seven seasonal employees. So obviously I have a very strong interest in an uninterrupted run of the show in the fall. Instead of repeating what I said the last time I submitted a testimony regarding bill 13-23, I will say what I held back on the last submission. I am not a politician or an individual with strong legal knowledge, but to me this bill appears to be a blank check to allow decisions to be made that can impact an event with very little to substantiate the reasoning for that action. I feel that a high school government student (not even in AP) could write a more comprehensive and understandable bill than is currently being presented. Please forgive my caustic response but it seems to me very little has changed since the last version of the bill. I am curious why it has been so rapidly brought back to the table? I feel this bill should be paused until it has undergone a thorough review and is written in a manner that is clear and concise in how and when it can be used.	
04/02/2023 23:20:25	Steven Exley	Canyon Lake	78133	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	This bill as written leads me to worry if the Maryland Renaissance Festival could possibly be denied a permit after so many years at the same location, with all the permits and zoning it has gone through already. It is of paramount concern to me, as it provides me with the vast bulk of my annual income each year and I rely quite heavily upon its operation each year. This event should be exempt from this permit, as too many people's lives would be severely impacted were it not to open due to the vagueness of the wording in this bill. The festival is important not only to the food sellers, artists and entertainers that travel from afar to operate it, but to the local companies involved in running it including sanitation, foods, parking building maintenance and groundskeeping, as well as the full time year round staff, and also to the tens of thousands of patrons who attend each season. Please dismiss or rewrite this bill with an exemption.	
04/02/2023 23:33:36	Kristin Thorson	Hudson	34667	Yes	Bronze Age Studios	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have been a vendor at the MD Renaissance Festival since 2006. I & many others depend on this festival occurrence for a large portion of our annual income. The festival is a time-honored & cherished tradition in the region. This bill appears to put the festival at risk, & I ask that further amendment be made to ensure our continued operation. Ideally, the festival will be exempt from the potential of cancellation as outlined in this bill & the extensive zoning approval the festival has held & maintained for decades will supersede any new permitting cancellation allowances. I implore you to consider the harsh effect that the cancellation of any part of the festival will have on hundreds of vendors, the management team & it's employees, & vast numbers of patrons who love & rely on this event. Thank you for your reconsideration! Kristin Thorson	
04/02/2023 23:41:26	Margaret Cefail	Catonsville	21228	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear County Council Members: I have worked with various booth owners at the Maryland Renaissance Festival since it opened in Crownsville in 1985. While the benefit I've derived from the Festival during these years has been more a welcome break from routine, the income my booth owner associates have realized accounts for a very significant percentage of their annual incomes. Additionally, the Festival business operates year-round at the festival grounds preparing, maintaining, and operating a shop and office. These efforts employ 10 full-time individuals who would be out of work if the festival could not open, as well as significantly affecting my booth owner associates at the festival. In addition to providing numerous booth owners with important income, the revenues in turn also support the local business community, as it is from these companies that building and gardening supplies, groceries, and other services are purchased by the booth owners. Further, local restaurants and entertainment venues are also supported and not just by the booth owners but by many patrons at the close of Festival days. Other beneficiaries of the Festival are charitable and non-profit organizations who have been invited to man a soft drink booth at the Festival who receive portions of the proceeds for their missions (an example is the Boy Scouts of America). I am concerned that the proposed bill No. 13-23 could be used to cancel the Renaissance Festival for reasons listed near the end and it is not clear who has authority nor does there appear to be any remedy or appeal process. I respectfully request that this bill be excluded or grandfathered as it was already approved as a special exception in zoning. I also offer that Festival patrons have often shared that it has become a local institution that year after year is a destination for them and their families who wish to enjoy an interesting, wholesome, and educational experience at a beautiful outdoor venue. In fact, after nearly 40 years at this location, the Festival welcomes not just the children of their original patrons, but a third generation of folks who look forward to coming every year. Again, I hope that you will consider excluding or grandfathering this bill. Sincerely, Meg Cefail Long-time Festival Participant	

Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
04/03/2023 1:16:17	Caitlin Cooke	Westminster	21157	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	My name is Cat Cooke, and I own a booth at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. I strongly oppose this bill, at least in how it is written. The proposed bill could be used to cancel the renaissance festival for reasons listed near the end. It is not clear who has authority nor is there any remedy or appeal. The festival should be excluded or grandfathered because it was already approved as a special exception in zoning many times over. The festival is the majority of my income. It is a unique venue where I am able to sell my art and sustain myself and 3 other artists. Similar to the festival grounds and office, we work year round to prepare for the event. This is true for most other artists participating in the festival. The unique nature of the venue allows me to work despite my medical issues, and is not something that could be replaced were the festival to close. It would be devastating to my livelihood and access to medical care. I implore you to consider the Maryland Renaissance Festival exempt or grandfathered.	
04/03/2023 1:17:09	Kathleen A. Dopita	Colorado Springs	80921	Yes	K.Dopita Studio	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I write in support of the Maryland Renaissance Festival, a year round business operating in Anne Arundel County for decades. As an artist accepted through a jury process to exhibit my metal sculpture there, a large portion of my annual income is from that event, so I speak on my behalf as well. Anne Arundel County has been successfully granting permits for decades before this proposed bill. This bill is not welcoming to events, it will bog down the County with red tape. It is vague, overbroad, and overreaching. It demands money for supposed services before a permit is granted, says a permit can be revoked at any time by the County at their sole discretion, and does not have oversight regarding the refunds of supposed services fees held, also solely decided by the County. Why would the County adopt this destructive bill? The County need not try to imagine how to run someone else's business to dictate how many people a business like the Festival should hire to staff their services. A private business should be a private business. The Festival can certainly decide who to hire based on past experience and study. Revocation of a permit at any time at the County's sole discretion is surely against Fair Trade Practice. That could have devastating affects. Hundreds of those associated with the Festival and their families and so many local businesses who count on the influx of Festival participants and patrons for their income would be devastated. I ask the County to look with wisdom upon the shortcomings of this bill since the bill has vast overreach, is against Fair Trade Practice, lacks oversight, and is a time wasting measure that could have devastating affects to so many businesses. It does not welcome inspiring and exciting events to the County. It walls off the County with red tape. Should this bill somehow pass, please exempt the Maryland Renaissance Festival. Thank you, K.Dopita	
04/03/2023 5:08:55	Rich Potter	Brooklyn NY	11221	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	In 1982, at age 15, I had little interest in sports, was socially on the outside of center, and didn't quite know who or what I was in the world. I discovered Maryland Renaissance festival and found that my high school experience was not the entire universe and that there was much else out there to discover. I got to play and explore and in some small but significant ways, find myself and like minded people. Four years later, I was touring as a juggling act at other renaissance festivals around the USA. A year later, I began my career with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. I could talk about the money. The dollars and cents, that I've made to support my career (40 years in and still going strong), or the money that comes into the community by patrons who go out to dinner at local businesses after a day of revelry, but I'm an artist. The money can't buy what this cultural institution has done for me: it's provided a safe haven for me to find, and develop who I am today, a world-traveling entertainer, educator, writer and visual artist. It was my first job as an entertainer. I keep coming back for nostalgia. But I'm only one person. Our continued visits, and occasional work days (yes; 40 years in and still love it), I see the seeds of future greatness. I see the huddled masses yearning to be free. I see today's lost teens finding a place to feel belonging. I see a safe place to just be. If you haven't been, I'd say you're missing out. Then again, it may not be the your thing. It is for countless people. Every year. People who can't wait to come back. Again and again. Because they feel at home. A special, magical, comfortable, freeing, welcoming, accepting home. Please don't take away our home.	
04/03/2023 7:22:10	Pamela Taylor	San Pedro	90731	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	To Whom it May Concern: My name is Pamela Taylor and I am once again writing to urge you to either not pass Bill 13-23a or to exclude The Maryland Renaissance Festival from it. I have been a vendor at this show for close to 30 years and I, and hundreds of people rely on the income we generate at the show for our livelihoods. In the years I have been associated with the festival I have observed management continually adjust and improve operations to minimize any impact on surrounding communities. In addition they are constantly building, upgrading, and streamlining the village experience to give the audience more for their money each year. As someone that has participated in many shows across the US, I can state unequivocally that by far this is the finest and most efficiently run show I have ever taken part in. Every vendor I talk to feels the same as do our customers. After the year we went dark due to Covid I was overwhelmed by the gratitude and joy of our returning customers, so many of them told me how much coming to the festival year after year means to them and their families. We are a vital, embraced, and connected part of this community and I urge you to protect that, for both the financial returns to the county and the immeasurable joy that pervades year after year, generation after generation for hundreds of thousands festival attendees. Thank you, Pamela Taylor	
04/03/2023 8:05:38	nancy barry	Millers	21102	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose		YES
04/03/2023 8:14:21	Gwendolyn McLaughlin	Westfield	27053	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear Council Members, I am writing in regard to Bill 13-23. One of the events that may be affected by this bill is The Maryland Renaissance Festival. This festival already has been approved to operate since 1985. I have been participating in the festival since 1990. I am currently one of the artisans that own a building on site. This festival makes up over 90% of my income. It employs countless local people and is treasured by so many. Please reconsider the restrictions in this bill. My livelihood depends on it. Thank you for you time. Gwendolyn McLaughlin/Rowensea Glass	
04/03/2023 8:42:43	Jeanne Gibbons	Mount Savage	21545	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Please see the attached letter with regard to proposed Bill 13-23. I have concerns regarding the Maryland Renaissance Festival's ability to operate with the current wording. This is a large, well-established event that employs local citizens, supports community non-profits and has become a tradition for many families. The economic impact of disrupting the festival would be devastating for year-round employees and participants, as well as local businesses who rely on the tourism the festival generates.. Please amend the language in proposed bill 13-23 to allow the Maryland Renaissance Festival to continue to successfully operate annually, in Anne Arundel County, as it has for almost 40 years without facing the uncertainty of annual permitting.	YES
04/03/2023 8:49:12	Michael Colella	Gaithersburg	20882	Yes	as part of the MD Renaissance Festival	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Dear Council members, in regards this bill and the MD Renaissance festival, I have owned a building at the festival for 8 years, many of the artists have been there 30+ years and we employ many local people. As an artist and senior citizen, the festival is responsible for 75% of the income annually to support my family. This is not a casual event as The festival business operates year-round at the festival grounds, employing 10 full time people, preparing for each season. Maintaining and making new and exciting experiences for the attendees every year. This bill should be excluded or grandfathered because it was already approved as a special exception in zoning. Please consider strongly the consequences this bill would have on all of us and the many kids and adults that come every year for this enjoyment that we provide. Thank you, Michael J. Colella, Sleeping Beauties, Wood artist.	
04/03/2023 8:53:02	Rachael Platt	LEONARDTOWN	20650	Yes	One:Eleven Pottery	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I respectfully oppose this bill as written because it could negatively impact the Maryland Renaissance Festival, an event that myself and countless others critically rely on every year for their livelihood. The impact on small business owners, performers, workers, etc is immense and many (including myself) have cultivated their lives around this event entirely. Before I purchased my shop at mdfr, I would travel up and down the east coast to sell my wares. Since entering this event, it has replaced all of my previous shows and much of my online sales. Mdrf is my lifeline now and I ask that you please consider an exception of this event on this bill. Thank you	
04/03/2023 9:00:32	Christine Chapman	Trumansburg, NY	14886	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Good morning! I own a business,(43 years) and a booth at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. This has been my community and lifestyle for 41 years. There are approximately 12 major shows like this in the country, of which MRF is considered the crown jewel. It has the highest standard of presentation, safety, and integrity on the part of the owners. This festival represents half of my family's income and is composed of generations of community. We are hoping for your support in creating a feeling of calm certainty going forward. Thank you for your attention, Christine Chapman	
04/03/2023 9:49:18	Sanda Vig Zigic	Arnold	21012	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	We started going to the Maryland Renaissance Faire over 20 years ago, first as patrons, and now we are helping with our friend's booth. The MD Ren Faire is a place of memories for many, also many couples were married there, and they all have wonderful memories, where family and friends gathered to share their joy of happiness. Many children had their first experience seeing actors on the boardwalk and musicians singing. Seeing happy faces has always been a joy at MD Ren Faire. There are also the actors, artists, and workers behind the scene that make the Ren Faire a wonderful experience and we look forward to every season. Every year we can't wait to come back, again and again. Our family and friends come from Europe , Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Finland, and from other countries , to visit MD Ren Faire. It is a special, magical, comfortable, freeing, welcoming, entertaining place to visit and enjoy. Many of the actors and artists come from other states and have to get lodging, food, and supplies for those nine weeks of Faire, which helps revenue in Anne Arundel County. There are also tourists (many of our friends and family) come for the weekends to visit the Faire that get lodging and also visit Annapolis while on vacation. Which again brings revenue to the county. The Maryland Renaissance Faire is also a village of hard working artists, actors, and vendors, plus behind the scene workers. For many of the artists, crafters, and actors this is the way they make their living. There are also people that get hired to help the vendors, artists, and become actors during this time. The Faire creates jobs for high school and college students. It creates jobs for the retired senior that wants to do something for nine weeks that is a fun and delightful place to be. It is a village of caring people, of hard workers, and that makes this place a joy to visit. Patrons, artists, vendors, and behind the scenes workers who travel for this purpose each year, spend money in Anne Arundel county on gas, food, and lodging. I urge you not to pass this bill which will not only negatively impact a great many festival workers, but it also will eliminate the money Anne Arundel County receives from the festival in tax revenues as well as from money spent by patrons and traveling workers. Thank you for your consideration. Nearly everyone who works there from the festival staff to the vendors and entertainers prepare year-round for the festival. The vendors making their items, the performers developing new parts or completely new acts, the booth owners updating and improving their booths and hiring staff and much more. Many of them make a majority of their yearly income at this festival. When I look at the MD Renaissance Festival fan boards on social media I see how this festival is the highlight of their year for the attendees. For the weeks before, during & after the festival the 100s of vendors from out of town stay in the local hotels and campgrounds bringing revenue to the county businesses by eating at local restaurants, buying building materials from local hardware stores etc. Over the years I've observed the owners continually upgrade and update buildings and grounds, make positive changes regarding parking and traffic control, and always strive to improve the experience and safety of patrons, participants, and the surrounding community. The festival business operates year-round at the festival grounds preparing, maintaining and operating a shop and office employing 10 full time people who would be out of work if the festival could not open, as well as our friends' business and the shops they own at the festival. I urge you not to pass this bill which will not only negatively impact a great many festival workers, but it also will eliminate the money Anne Arundel County receives from the festival in tax revenues as well as from money spent by patrons and traveling workers. Thank you for your consideration if Bill #13-23a were to pass, MDRF must be exempt from its application. Also, the MD Renaissance Festival should be excluded or grandfathered from Bill #13-23a because it was already approved as a special exception in zoning. Thank you for your consideration Thank you for accepting and reading my comments. Sincerely, Sandra Vig Zigic	

Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
04/03/2023 9:55:17	Thomas Carroll	Hendersonville	21754	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Hello, I am a booth owner at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. I respectfully oppose this bill because it could result in the hundreds of self employed and small business owners that make up the Maryland Renaissance Festival to shut down. The proposed ordinance could be used to cancel the festival, for reasons listed near the end of the bill, and it is not clear who has that authority nor is there any remedy or appeal. The Smith family (festival owners) work hard with the county to operate the festival respectfully, safely, and as a part of the community. The festival should be excluded or grandfathered in because it was already approved as a special exception. The renaissance festival should be among the "excluded event facilities" already in the ordinance, such as..." arenas or other structures if the structure is specifically designed to be used for the assembly of individuals..." It seems the purpose of the amendment is to prevent poorly planned and unsafe events from happening. The Maryland Renaissance Festival has proven year after year that it is an extremely well planned and a safe event and with its permanent structures it is on par with athletic events and should be excluded from this bill. It might not be realized but many booth owners, like myself, work hard all year to make product to sell at this festival. Some of us make 80%-90% of our yearly income at this festival. To lose that income would be devastating. It would also impact many locals that are employed at different booths. I myself hire 4-6 local employees and I am only one of hundreds of booths that hire local. The Maryland Renaissance Festival brings so much joy to the community while also supporting so many artists, entertainers, local workers, and many other small businesses that it needs to be protected / exempt from this bill. Thank you for your time.	
04/03/2023 9:59:34	Richard Bailey	Middletown	21769	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I oppose this as written because it seems towards the end the wording is not clear and could be used to deny a day or weekend of The Maryland Renaissance Festival. I own a shop there and employ 6 local employees. We prepare all year long for the 9 weekend Festival and a great portion of my income comes from those 9 weekends. For some of us, its our only yearly income. Anything that could cause us to lose even one day of selling would have a huge negative impact on thousands of people that work hard to make this event successful.	
04/03/2023 10:06:25	Veronica Landis	Bowie	20715	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	No Position	I started going to the Maryland Renaissance Faire over 20 years ago, first as a patron, and now helping with my friends booth. The Ren Faire is a place of memories for many, my husband and I were married there, that is one of our wonderful memories, where our family and friends gathered to share our joy. Our great nieces and nephews had their first experience several years ago seeing actors on the boardwalk and musicians singing. Seeing happy faces has always been a joy at MD Ren Faire. There are also the actors, artists, and workers behind the scene that make the Ren Faire a wonderful experience and we look forward to every season. Many of the actors and artist come from other states and have to get lodging, food, and supplies for those nine weeks of Faire, which helps revenue the Anne Arundel County. There are also tourist (many of our friends and family) come for the weekend to visit the Faire that get lodging and also visit Annapolis while on vacation. Which again brings revenue to the county. The Maryland Renaissance Faire is also a village of hard working artist, actors, and vendors, plus behind the scene workers. For many of the artist, crafters, and actors this is the way they make their living. There are also people that get hired to help the vendors, artist, and become actors during this time. The Faire creates jobs for high school and college students. It creates jobs for the retired senior that wants to do something for nine weeks that is a fun and delightful place to be. It is a village of caring people and hard workers, and that makes this place a joy to visit. Also, the MD Renaissance Festival should be exempt from this Bill #13-23a because it was already approved as having a special exception in zoning.	
04/03/2023 10:11:04	Stephen Bennett	Waxahachie	75168	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have been an artisan/craftsman shop owner at the Maryland Renaissance Festival (MDRF) for 36 years. This festival, which I consider to be one of the best in the country, supports myself, family, and most of the participants in the faire. There are months of preparation and investments for the festival. The legislation as worded puts the festival (or any established show, such as the county fair, the boat show, etc...) at great risk. If the MDRF were not to happen, we would all suffer loss of livelihood. The community-restaurants, hotels, gas stations, and such would all experience loss. The MDRF does seem to bring 300,000 people into the county for a festival. Perhaps the legislation need to make accommodations for "recurring" events- a one time application. Or perhaps, the legislation ought to consider "grandfathering" in current established events. Thank you.	
04/03/2023 10:17:54	Jeanne S Berger	Crownsville	21032	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	See letter attached. 2023 Bill 13-23a - J Berger Booth Owner Letter	YES
04/03/2023 10:19:37	Alan Lang	Pasadena	21122	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have proposed 10 amendments for consideration. 1. Restore the deleted phrase, The requirement for the special event permit shall not infringe on the freedom of the right to assemble 2. Increase the public assembly group size from 50 to 500 3 and 4. Address whether the Dept of Recs and Parks (DPR) existing special events permit process will be superseded 5. Specifically state that regular season athletic games are exempt 6 and 7. Address whether the DPR existing tournament permit process will be superseded 8 and 9. Require hyperlink to County criteria to be used in denying permits due to inadequate plans 10. Exempt events that obtained permits prior to enactment of bill	YES
04/03/2023 10:24:57	Victor Smith	Ithaca	14850	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I've had a business that employs 19 people for the run of the festival since 1985 in the county. This is a large part of my income and its value is a big piece of my retirement plan. I'm troubled by the lack of clearly defined criteria and authority for canceling a special event. This seems to open the door to political pressure and worse.	
04/03/2023 10:31:39	Judith Tessem	Hanover	17331	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	I have written once before about this bill as it may apply to the Maryland Renaissance Festival, which, as I understand has already been approved by Special Exception. My husband and I own a pottery booth at the Festival which provides almost all of our income from our pottery business which is nearly our sole support. It is my understanding that the Festival does not rely on County resources as it provides its own police and medical services. The Maryland Renaissance also maintains an office year-round which employs ten people. I hope you will consider these matters as you render a decision on this issue. SO many people derive income from this major venue. Thank you for your attention-- Judy Tessem	
04/03/2023 10:45:49	Peter Andres	Trumansburg	14886	Yes		Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	As a booth owner at the Maryland Renaissance Festival I have concerns about 13-23. Hundreds of us travel from both in and out of state to work at the festival. We are hard-working artisans and entertainers. This is how we make our living. The festival brings hundreds of thousands of people into the area where they spend money. We collect and pay Maryland sales tax. The money generated at the festival is also spent in restaurants and gas stations, motels, and B&Bs. The bill feels potentially threatening for many. Thank you for your consideration, Peter Andres	
04/03/2023 10:49:47	Belinda L Woodman	Newark	19702	Yes	Maryland Renaissance Faire	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	Oppose	Good morning, I am writing to you about bill 13-23. My family and I have a booth at the Maryland Renaissance Faire for 44 years. My entire family helps and looks forward to every season. This Faire is 90% of my yearly income and without it I don't know what will happen. Many vendors travel year round to different Faire's. Change of schedule would greatly affect them. The fair employees many local people who depend on this income. At a time when many people are struggling and jobless this is so important. This is one of the top Renaissance Faire's in the country and brings in a needed revenue to the local community, gas food and lodging. They visit other attractions in the local area. I believe traffic flow into the festival is much better since online only sales started, if you don't have a ticket you don't try and come. I believe last year we had 5 sold-out weekend's. I pray that we will be grandfathered in and able to operate as normal as we have passed all zoning requirements in the past and have been operating for over 44 years. I hope things can be worked out and we will be looking forward to seeing you at Revel Grove in August. Thank you for your time and consideration. Belinda Woodman Bryson Studio@MDRF	
04/03/2023 10:49:58	Kate Jones	Pasadena	21122	Yes	Kadon Enterprises, Inc.	Bill 13-23a: Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting (amended)	No Position	I own a booth at Maryland Renaissance Festival: Ye Olde Gamery, showing and selling original puzzles and games. We built it on space leased from the Festival owners. I have depended on business I do in this booth for 39 years, accounting for 25% of annual sales; also provides income for 8 to 10 helpers. We have good safety measures, including smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, entrance ramp, many exits for crowds and fresh air. It's even reassuring that our booth is right next to the First Aid station. Our staff uses our private privy. We pass inspection annually. The Festival is excellently managed and run, including compliance with liquor sales and all other regulations, and excellent safety in all respects. It is a beloved attraction in the region for over 45 years, on private land with no extra demands on the county. The many artisans provide pleasure to thousands, employment for hundreds, and added revenues for Anne Arundel County. The festival is a regularly recurring annual season, not just a one-time special event. It is a major attraction, with permanent installations, and the visitors it attracts are also beneficial for other businesses in the area. The festival makes thousands of people happy. Its existence and operations are vital and beneficial to AA County and the whole state of Maryland. Please give it your utmost care.	YES
66									
03/22/2023 20:00:44	Victoria Ziegler	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I am writing in support of Bill 19-23, which would ban plastic bag usage at retail establishments. Prior to moving to Anne Arundel County five years ago, I lived in Montgomery County, where I vividly saw the positive impact of a plastic bag ban. I was originally skeptical about the MoCo ban, but there were very clear and fast improvements from the ban there, including very visible changes to the state of the Beltway. In Annapolis, I primarily patronize a grocery store (Lidl) that does not use plastic bags. People learn to adjust to plastic bans, and life goes on. Let's do a little thing and make the world a better place. Say no to more plastic.	
03/23/2023 10:27:18	Mary Burke-Hueffmeier	Linthicum Heigl	21090	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I support the ban on single use plastic shopping bags. All over our county I see plastic bags stuck on trees and bushes, floating in our creeks, and blowing down our roadways.	
03/23/2023 10:40:07	JoAnne Zoller	Glen Burnie	21061	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I urge you to pass the Ban the Bag Bill 19-23. Once passed, our county trees and waterways will longer be littered with plastic bags, our recycling facilities will not be clogged, and our landfills will not host millions of plastic bags, which do not decompose, but instead break down into small microplastic pieces. The impact of this bill will be tremendous! Paper bags are not a good alternative, either, as we need all the trees we currently have and more, as our climate changes. This bill, based on surveys of shopper behavior before and after other plastic bag bans have been passed around the state, will effectively motivate shoppers in our county to switch to reusable bags. I myself have already transitioned to using reusable bags while shopping. It's not hard, once it becomes a habit, and I no longer have to contend with a pile of plastic bags accumulating in my home. The Ban the Bag bill will improve the quality of life in our county and protect our natural resources. We need to stop giving out "free" plastic bags which are so costly to our environment, and protect our trees by discouraging use of paper bags. Please pass this carefully written bill as submitted!	
03/23/2023 12:05:59	Roger P. Ziegler	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	This is a good first step to eliminate waste in packaging and help make consumers aware of the need to reduce the use of plastic. This will also help to reduce litter and keep the plastic bags out of trees.	
03/23/2023 13:58:39	Michael Alexander	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Please support Bill 19-23 Ban the Bag. It is more important than ever we act to stop polluting our environment. for justification, please read theStockholm 50 website. <a href="https://www.stockholm50.global/news-and-stories/how-you-can-help-protect-environment-plastic-pollution">https://www.stockholm50.global/news-and-stories/how-you-can-help-protect-environment-plastic-pollution</a>	
03/23/2023 18:07:40	John Cochran	Annapolis	21401-6578	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Please support the ban on plastic shopping bags.	
03/24/2023 18:40:15	Susan McDonald	Severna Park, I	21146	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	As a constituent of District 3 for 24 years, I am asking you to vote YES for the upcoming County Ordinance Bill 19-23. I am a Pasadena elementary public-school librarian and have worked with students for 20 years. My students are deeply concerned about our plastic pollution crisis and want to eliminate plastic bags. They have performed demonstrations showing how to create a reusable bag from an old T-shirt. They are willing to adjust and rely on reusable bags and they want to reduce our plastic dependency. They drink from reusable water containers. I myself am so discouraged while in our Pasadena Walmart, watching shopping cart after shopping cart filled with plastic bags go by knowing that only 5% of those bags will make it through the recycling process. When I shop at Aldi's and the new Lidl's in Glen Burnie, I noticed these stores do not offer plastic bags. Shoppers there use their own bags or buy paper or insulated bags. By not offering "free plastic" bags to their customers, these stores can offer lower prices. I recommend you try shopping at one of these stores and watch how easily the customers handle their purchases without using any plastic bags. This is not a burden on any of us; just a change of habit. My students and myself are doing our part to reduce plastic. We are counting on our legislators to do their part for a healthier future – Vote YES for County Ordinance Bill 19-23. You have the power to be our superhero!	

Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
03/27/2023 13:57:56	Susan Venter	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I have participated in stream and beach clean ups and I have seen and picked up the result of the use of plastic bags. I cleaned up one stream where I dug down several inches and was still finding old plastic bags buried a while ago. I cleaned another stream which was full of Home Depot plastic bags because the store was right next to the stream and many bags had blown over from the store and littered the landscape and stream. And I see so many trees and bushes with plastic bags caught in them. I also volunteer with the National Aquarium in Baltimore and do clean ups around Baltimore. And after Baltimore banned plastic bags the difference was very evident in the decrease in the number of plastic bags collected. And to the one county council person who said to me that they did not want to ban the bags because the poor could not afford the bags, I say that one, if city of Baltimore has seen fit to ban them, I do not see why the affluent county of Anne Arundel could overcome this obstacle. And if there is concern about the less affluent citizens of the county being able to afford the costs to use plastic bags, I am sure that the county could give away reusable bags or having companies sponsor give aways. And I have seen in other locations that have instituted such bans and it may take time but eventually it will become a habit that citizens become accustomed to.	
03/30/2023 15:35:45	BERNIE ROBINSON	GLEN BURNIE	21061	No	Anne Arundel Group of the Sierra Club	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Please see attachment.	YES
03/31/2023 8:47:19	Katharine Caldwell	Severna Park	21146	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Dear Council Members, As a resident of AA County since 1989, I wish to express my full support for this important piece of legislation to help reduce plastic waste in our county. Toxic micro-plastics are in our drinking water. Plastic waste imperils our environment, wildlife and our health. The County's Shoreline along the Chesapeake Bay and rivers make the passage of this legislation banning plastic bags even more important. This law once passed and monitored will help slow the adverse effects on our environment and ecosystem. Similar bills have already passed in Howard, Montgomery and Baltimore Counties, plus Baltimore City. It is time that Anne Arundel County join our neighboring counties in this important effort. Thank you for your support. Kate Caldwell 40 Windward Drive Severna Park, MD 21146 410.972.6535	
03/31/2023 11:20:11	John W. Breen	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	written statement JWB Testimony AACOUNTY BILL 19-23. 04032023.pdf	
03/31/2023 15:51:09	Matt Gove			No	Ocean City, MD and Washington DC Chapters of the Surfrider Foundation	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	The Surfrider Foundation supports Bill 19-23, the Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County. Surfrider's Washington DC and Ocean City, MD Chapters of volunteers have worked for years to pass similar bills, and Surfrider has passed similar bills to 19-23 across the country. And they work! Clean up data has proven time and time again that banning or placing a fee on plastic bags reduces plastic bag usage and litter. We commend you for also placing a fee on all other types of bags besides thin plastic bags. Without such a fee (for example if you were to just ban thin plastic bags) customers will simply switch to using thicker plastic bags or paper bags, which have negative impacts to our communities as well. Please pass Bill 19-23, thank you Matt Gove Mid-Atlantic Policy Manager Surfrider Foundation	
03/31/2023 16:42:09	Nancy Bromberg	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I support a plastic bag/single use plastic ban in Anne Arundel County. Please see attached file. If both Kenya and Tanzania have single use plastic bans surely our county can!	YES
04/01/2023 12:58:18	Milly B Welsh	Davidsonville	32035	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I spend hours of my life picking up trash thrown from cars as they speed past my property. Banning these bags would eliminate some of it.	
04/02/2023 8:40:27	Reed Perry	Annapolis	21401	No	Chesapeake Conservancy	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Thank you for considering Chesapeake Conservancy's written testimony, attached to this form.	YES
04/02/2023 12:46:55	Tracy Gill	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I support Bill 19-23, Ban the Bill Act of Anne Arundel County. These bags are littering our parks, neighborhoods and streets. People can bring reusable bags to the store or pay for a paper one - not a big deal. Let's get rid of plastic bags in Anne Arundel County! Thanks for listening, Tracy Gill	
04/02/2023 23:13:00	Susan Dapkunas	Annapolis, MD	21403	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	I support bill 19-23 for the following reasons: I. The devastating effect plastic has on ocean life. A. Plastic bags litter streets, highways and the natural environment ending up in waterways, our Chesapeake Bay and the ocean. II. In Anne Arundel County alone, 85% of shoppers use free plastic bags given out by the retailers. That's a lot of plastic III. Plastic takes lifetimes to degrade, damaging all parts of the environment even being ingested by humans as minute particles. IV. Plastic bags are not recyclable in Maryland and actually damage recycling equipment. V. Single use plastic bags are made from fossil fuels leading to greenhouse gas emissions. VI. Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Easton, Salisbury, College Park, Chestertown, Takoma Park, Westminster and Laurel already have "Ban the Bag" bills. LET'S GET WITH THE TIMES! Thank you, Susan Dapkunas ?	
04/02/2023 23:58:28	Louise Taylor	Annapolis	2140	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Plastic bags present a significant danger to children and wildlife. It is long past time to remove this scourge from our waterways, trees and roadsides. Paper bags represent a threat to our environment as well due to the destruction of trees and the overuse of water and chemicals in their manufacture. Shoppers are able to step up and bring their own re-useable bags. It's a small commitment which will have the big effect of protecting the environment.	
04/03/2023 0:37:12	Elvia Thompson	Annapolis	21401	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	My name is Elvia Thompson. I am co-founder and former president of Annapolis Green, a local environmental nonprofit. The heart of Annapolis Green's mission is exactly what Bill Number 19-23 is about: Behavior Change. It is important that members of the Council understand the intent of this somewhat complicated bill. The intent is to encourage people to either bring their own reusable bags to retail stores or to opt to take no bag at all to reduce the amount of plastic we use – plastic that does not break DOWN but instead breaks UP into microplastic that irreversibly damages our environment. There are retail stores right now that have "trained" their customers to not expect to receive free bags at all, such as Sam's Club and Lidl. Behavior change has already happened in those stores. The public can certainly adjust to a new expectation at all of Anne Arundel County's retail establishments – the new expectation that no bag will be provided unless it's clearly paid for and that the purchase bag will not be plastic. This is what I mean by saying "clearly paid for." Most retail stores that offer bags at the point of sale offer plastic bags because they are cheaper, a while some retailers, who would like to appear more in tune with environmental issues, provide paper bags at point of sale. Both types of bags have environmental consequences and they are NOT free to the customer. We all pay for these supposedly free bags because their cost is built into the store's overhead. This bill makes it clear that the bag has a cost – the 10 cents will appear on the receipt as a separate line item and THAT is what will make behavior change happen. Please vote favorably on this bill, for the benefit of our environment. Thank you.	YES
04/03/2023 9:06:58	Karen Ann Kalla	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Good afternoon, Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Pickard, and members of the Anne Arundel County Council. My name is Karen Kalla. As a resident of Anne Arundel County, I strongly encourage you to vote in favor of ordinance 19-23. Thank you, council members Ms. Rodvien, Ms. Hummer, and Vice-Chair Pickard for introducing this necessary bill. Bill 19-23 would prohibit a retail establishment from providing plastic carryout bags to a customer and charge ten cents for each paper and reusable carryout bag that it provides. Exemptions include pharmacist bags that contain drugs and plastic bags for bakery items, fruits, vegetables, raw meat, and seafood. This is a sensible and long overdue step in a comprehensive approach to protecting the environment. Anne Arundel County residents use an estimated 215 million plastic bags per year and Marylanders use 2.2 billion per year. The harm to the environment—air, land, fauna, flora, and aquatic life from the production, use, and disposal of plastic bags is well documented. Also well documented is the fact that prohibiting plastic carryout bags effectively reduces the use of disposable bags. For example, in Anne Arundel County grocery stores that do not offer single use plastic carryout bags and charge for other bags, only 9.6% of customers choose disposable bags. Consumers quickly learn to bring their own reusable bags and develop a new environmentally conscious habit. In Puerto Rico and many European regions where I have traveled, plastic is not an option and customers bring their own bags or boxes, purchase bags, or use none at all. There are no other options. This is absolutely critical to protecting the health of our communities, both human and natural and it is an easy and proven practice. According to the Anne Arundel County of Public Works, the county "consists of 12 primary watersheds and hundreds of sub-watersheds and all of them discharge directly into the Chesapeake Bay. Therefore, the activities that occur in Anne Arundel County have a direct impact on the Chesapeake Bay." Anne Arundel County's juxtaposition with these waterways compels each citizen to work individually and with its local governments to protect these precious resources and respect their role in and value to the natural world, cultures, and economies near and far. The use of reusable carryout bags is a well-established practice in other counties in Maryland, across the country, and beyond our mainland. It is Anne Arundel County's time to join with others in this effort to maintain the health of resources on which our individual and collective well-being depends. For these reasons and the many others presented to you on behalf of this bill, I respectfully ask for your support of Bill 19-23 Public Safety – Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County.	YES
04/03/2023 9:39:15	Andrew Banks	Annapolis	21403	No	Anne Arundel Sierra Club	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Dear Council Member, As a newly elected member of the Anne Arundel Sierra Club Board, I urge you to pass the Ban the Bag Act. This legislation will allow our county to join other counties and municipalities throughout Maryland and America in taking one of the most destructive sources of plastics pollution out of the environment. I have attached for your review a factsheet that makes a solid case on the urgent need to act on this immediately. Thank you in advance for your support of this crucial effort to protect our county, its people and environment. Best regards, Andrew Banks Board Member, Anne Arundel Sierra Club	YES
04/03/2023 10:33:02	Anna Weshner-Dunning	Rockville	20852	No	Oceana	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support		YES
04/03/2023 10:48:52	Julieta Rodrigo	Annapolis	21403	No	Chesapeake Bay Foundation	Bill 19-23: Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County	Support	Please see attachment for testimony.	YES
23									
03/30/2023 14:08:10	William "Harris" Woodward	Laurel	20723	No	Finish Werks Custom Modular	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	From a purely selfish material standpoint, we stand to gain from this legislation since we build modular prefab, and smaller dwellings are tailor made for prefab. Because we can most cost-effectively deliver nearly complete ADU's, our clients - your constituents - can more easily realize the economic and other benefits of this affordable housing. If I went out of business tomorrow, I would still put my voice behind this legislation. I have little patience or empathy for those NIMBY's whose opposition is mostly ungrounded in love of community! I have 2 teens and 2 21yr olds... none of them see a future with affordable housing options. We can and must change this. NOTE the attached "office cottage" was classified in AA Co as an Accessory Residential Structure. We did not include provisions for cooking which would have created an illegal ADU. It's time for the shenanigans to stop. Expand property owners' rights and create a more equitable future for all.	YES
03/30/2023 15:19:58	Julie Lowe	Wittman	21676	No	Talbot Interfaith Shelter	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	Anne Arundel County could be on the leading edge of solving the housing crisis in our country. ADU's could help young people to get a housing start, could help teachers and other human service workers to live in the county in which they work, could help seniors to age in place. Why wouldn't you want them???	
03/30/2023 15:41:06	Janice Romanosky	Millersville	21108-1268	No	Pando Alliance	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	As principal of a company that provides verification and certification services for affordable multifamily projects, I am keenly aware of the acute housing deficit throughout the State of MD. Anywhere a dwelling unit or units can be added - whether for low-to-moderate income residents or not, can reduce pressure on planned or already established affordable housing communities. Speaking now as a private homeowner, I added an ADU to my home's basement last year. The intent is to allow my husband and me to age in place in this new, one-level apartment while having other family members occupy the upper levels. While it was a sizable investment and a complicated permitting process, I feel it was an important step toward ensuring my family can remain close to each other for as long as possible. For all of these reasons, I feel strongly that removing barriers to increased ADU housing is to the great benefit of all county residents.	
03/31/2023 7:01:53	Krystal L Jarvis	Pasadena	21122-6336	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support		
03/31/2023 14:37:29	Kurt Svendsen	ARNOLD	21012	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Oppose	See attached written testimony	YES
03/31/2023 16:44:52	Tony Ruffin	Hanover	21076	Yes	ALL THINGS REMODELING	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support		

Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
03/31/2023 17:02:40	Christina Williams	Salisbury	21801	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	ADU's are a critical means for families to move their aging family members closer while allowing them to maintain their independence and dignity. Over the next 20 years, households in their 80's will be the fastest growing age group, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University. With nearly 18 million people aged 80 and older by 2038, provisions need to be made for quality living experiences for our elderly. More than 19 million older adults are living in homes that are ill-equipped to safely meet their needs (HFHI). As an employee of Habitat for Humanity of Wicomico County, I see the devastation caused when aging adults are forced out of their homes due to declining health and are relegated to long-term care facilities, where their quality of life dramatically declines. Having the option for an aging parent or grandparent to move to the property of their family makes all the difference in their longevity and the quality of their remaining years. Sometimes it is not possible or practical for an adult child to move their elderly person into their existing home. Having the ability to construct an ADU on their property for their aging family member means the comfort (for all parties) of knowing that their person(s) are close by, but not taking away any privacy or sense of independence (again on either part). A personal story, if you will - My husband's mother is widowed, 85, and in early stages of dementia. It is quickly becoming apparent that she will not be able to live alone much longer. However, she is active, feels independent, and loves to decorate her home and cook her food, which we feel is important for her to do for as long as she can. Moving her into a single room in our home would take away her sense of having a home and life of her own, would make her feel as if she were walking on eggshells around our design and lifestyle, and would hamper her lifestyle to the point of it being mentally detrimental to her. If we were permitted to build her a small ADU, then she would have her own home to do with as she pleased, while still being just outside of our door should she need us. I feel this bill is important not only for Anne Arundel, but for all counties in Maryland as a precedent is being established for the use of homeowners property, and the future happiness of those with whom we would share it in the way we deem best fitting.	
04/01/2023 12:36:36	John W. Van de Kamp	Annapolis	21403	No	Bay Ridge Civic Association	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Oppose	"Bay Ridge is a Shore Erosion Control District(SECID) Community consisting of Limited Development Areas (LDAs) and Resource Conservation Areas (RCAs) with nearly 4.0 miles of Severn River, Chesapeake Bay, and Lake Ogleton shoreline. Any construction, addition, or activity that effects Bay Ridge's shoreline must be meticulously evaluated and its potential effects determined before it is allowed to take place. Bay Ridge residents pay annual County taxes to accomplish the following 14 steps 1. Repairing Revetments at both ends of River Drive, and repairing and redirecting storm drains. 2. Maintaining vegetation on River Drive(killing invasive and plugging stabilizing species) 3. Removing harmful invasives from Bay Drive slope, and seeding and/or/replanting 4. Periodic trimming of the crest of the Bay Drive slope 5. Technical assistance including permitting services for projects on BRCA shoreline 6. Sand nourishment for the balance of the River Drive beaches, and Bay Drive beaches South of Wainwright 7. Stopping leak of 200 LF of Bay Drive Bulkhead at the end of May Avenue 8. Stabilizing 300LF steep slope, Bay Drive (Survey FY23/Design Permit Const FY24) 9 Repair/Replace the short section of bulkhead on South-side of Ramp at Marina 10. Replacing Main Bulkhead at Marina in approximately year 2032 11. Construction to mitigate periodic beach gully-building at 2 Herndon Avenue 12. Power wash and reseal wooden stairs at road ends along Bay Drive (every 3 years) 13. Performance and Maintenance study Bay Drive breakwaters 14. Sea level rise and Climate Change vulnerability assessment Based on these considerations and others presented, we urge that this bill's consequences and purpose be more fully thought-through and clarified before taking a vote.	
04/02/2023 10:27:38	Carol Patterson	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Oppose	Bay Ridge is an old established community that has enjoyed a long and successful relationship with Anne Arundel County in regard to zoning designations—first Manor, and then R2 in 1971, a zoning designation that works well in conjunction with county and state Critical Area laws, a zoning designation we wish to keep. An increase in zoning density in the Limited Development Area of the Critical Area as proposed in Bill 6-23 would place an unnecessary burden on infrastructure (especially sewer lines), not only in Bay Ridge, but in waterfront communities county wide. Because Bay Ridge relies on well water, an increase in density would also place a burden on this resource, so vital to residents and vegetation. Bill 6-23 would do little to achieve its stated purpose of creating affordable housing so greatly needed in Anne Arundel County. The Council needs to give much more thought to Bill 6-23. Ramifications and potential consequences need to be studied before a vote is taken. The DPW must explore the impact of increased density on existing sewer lines and septic systems in LDAs within the Critical Area throughout the vast coastlines of Anne Arundel County—a time-consuming undertaking. As others have already done, I, too, urge that the words shown here in bold be added to the bill's definitions in 18-1-191 (44) to read: "UNLESS THEY ARE LOCATED WITHIN THE RESOURCE CONSERVATION AREA OR THE LIMITED DEVELOPMENT AREA OF THE CRITICAL AREA."	
04/02/2023 13:50:11	Irene	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Oppose	Thank you for the kind reply to our previously submitted testimony, but the reply itself underscores the need for this bill to be more carefully considered as to its purpose. We had pointed out that allowing short term rentals of detached ADUs in water adjacent communities with no mass transit most likely will not alleviate the need for more affordable housing for those who also cannot afford vehicles. Instead, it is more likely to encourage home owners to build/convert and rent those ADUs through agencies like AirBnB and VRBO at rates considerably higher than for long term rentals and beyond the reach of those the bill seeks to help. In reply, we learned that the bill also is intended to help wealthy people who have hit a financial snag to make money on the side by building/converting and renting out a detached ADU, possibly with no setback limits. And the bill would do this at the cost of allowing greater density in critical areas other than the now specifically excluded resource conservation areas, with all the implications for the health of the Bay and tributaries. If the bill would not, in fact, exclude detached ADUs from the density/impervious surface calculations in critical areas such as LDAs, then we request that the legislative analysis of the bill specifically clarify this issue. We should add that this bill is not being introduced into an ideal world: we observe the County's zoning office appears overwhelmed and is not enforcing current impervious surface requirements on new building/remodeling of properties in the critical area, which heightens our sensitivities to the potential consequences of this bill. And if, as we have been told, it is anticipated that a very low percentage of homeowners will take advantage of the bill's liberalized provisions then we ask why enact it?	
04/02/2023 21:33:19	Greg Cantori	Annapolis	21403	Yes		Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	Please see attached testimony in support of this important housing option.	YES
04/03/2023 7:34:38	Minister Brian Bordley	Baltimore	21286	No	ONE More... ONE Less Mentoring Inc.,	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	As a disabled dialysis patient from 2014- 2021,I was placed on an 811 disabled housing list. The accessibility wait for a disabled 2bedroom apartment was/is ridiculous. I required a sterile room for in home dialysis and the other for sleeping quarters. The lack of AACounty housing priority to make more housing units handicap accessible infringes on the Disability act and exceeds the wait time for a specialized accommodating unit by 6-8 years on a waitlist. Prayerfully this additional testimony surpass the holdup and debate of the cost factor an moves into implementation quicker than later.	
04/03/2023 7:35:02	Minister Brian Bordley	Baltimore	21286	No	ONE More... ONE Less Mentoring Inc.,	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	As a disabled dialysis patient from 2014- 2021,I was placed on an 811 disabled housing list. The accessibility wait for a disabled 2bedroom apartment was/is ridiculous. I required a sterile room for in home dialysis and the other for sleeping quarters. The lack of AACounty housing priority to make more housing units handicap accessible infringes on the Disability act and exceeds the wait time for a specialized accommodating unit by 6-8 years on a waitlist. Prayerfully this additional testimony surpass the holdup and debate of the cost factor an moves into implementation quicker than later.	
04/03/2023 9:42:14	Erica Smith Ewing	Arlington	22203	No	Institute for Justice	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	Please see attached	YES
04/03/2023 9:45:52	Lily Openshaw	Annapolis	21403	No	The Bay Ridge Civic Association	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	No Position	Residents of the Critical Areas within the Annapolis Neck Peninsula and the Bay Ridge neighborhood request the County Council reconsider exempting ADUs from the density count within the Limited Development Areas (LDAs) of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. One argument for the exemption has been that reports show that, in reality, few ADUs will actually be built. But that might be outdated information. A March 2023 article from the Seattle Times reports just the opposite. In fact, since the City Council revamped their ADU regulations two years ago, the City has seen a 250% increase in ADU permitting. These ADUs are not cheap – the median ADU units are selling for \$732,000. Concern is growing that ADUs are not yielding affordable housing, but, instead, are increasing density in neighborhoods that can't sustain it structurally with parking problems as one example. For our neighborhoods in the Critical Area of the Chesapeake Bay, this increased density also negatively impacts the health of tributaries and other watershed features of the Chesapeake Bay. Please reconsider the exemption to the density requirements of the Critical Area law.	
04/03/2023 10:11:53	Tamela E Bresnahan	Severna Park	21146	No	Yes and No on behalf of AARP but I am county resident	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support		YES
04/03/2023 10:25:28	Dajaun Gay	Annapolis	21401	No	Ward 6, City of Annapolis	Bill 6-23aaa: Accessory Dwelling Units (amended)	Support	Housing should be obtainable to every individual in our county regardless of socioeconomic status. The lack of housing production focused on our middle class and most vulnerable citizens has led to a quiet housing crisis in our city and county. The Sponsors of 6-23 should be commended for their work and commitment to housing affordability. Below are examples of starting rates for studio and 1-bedroom apartments (same size as ADU/granny flats) surrounding Annapolis. The trend toward "luxury" apartments is not only burdening the Gen-Z and millennial crowd, but it also has impacts on seniors and young families in our communities. I urge the council to support 6-23 with amendments that do not burden the owner and force them to overprice or keep their ADU off the market. Maris Apartment's 608 sq. Ft. 1 Bedroom 1 Bathroom Starting at \$2,084 725 sq. Ft. 1 Bedroom 1 Bathroom Starting at \$2,323 754 sq. Ft. 1 Bedroom 1 Bathroom Starting at \$2,376 The James Apartments Studio 612 sq. ft. \$2,185 - \$2,627	
							16		
04/02/2023 12:09:21	Jaden Farris	Crownsville	21032	No	Annapolis Pride	Res. 7-23: Oppose Maryland House Bill 119 and Senate Bill 199	Oppose		YES
04/02/2023 21:46:26	John Jasen	Pasadena	21122	Yes		Res. 7-23: Oppose Maryland House Bill 119 and Senate Bill 199	Oppose		YES
04/03/2023 8:29:17	Lynda Davis	Linthicum	21090	Yes		Res. 7-23: Oppose Maryland House Bill 119 and Senate Bill 199	Oppose	I oppose this resolution because the integrity and efficacy of our educational system benefits from the requirement that local Boards of Education follow Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) curriculum frameworks and I support HB119. HB119 as amended requires local Boards of Education to conform to MSDE Curriculum Frameworks - such as Comprehensive Skills Based Health Curriculum, and other MSDE Curriculum Framework, as well other instructional programs. It ensures that schools teach information that is inclusive and historically accurate, including perspectives of people who are often excluded. I believe that this educational model best equips children to become thoughtful adults who can effectively navigate the world. Legislation requiring that local school boards adhere to MSDE curriculum framework helps to ensure that the educational needs of all Maryland children are consistently being met. For all of these reasons, I oppose Resolution 7-23. Thank you.	

## Legislative Testimony 4-3-2023 (online submissions)

Timestamp	Full Name	City	Zip Code	Are you representing yourself?	What organization or whom do you represent?	Legislation	Position	Remarks	Attachment
04/03/2023 8:32:17	Abbie M. Ellicott	Severna Park	21146	No	The Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students	Res. 7-23: Oppose Maryland House Bill 119 and Senate Bill 199	Oppose	<p>Resolution 7-23: RESOLUTION urging the Maryland General Assembly to oppose House Bill 119 and any amendments to conform Senate Bill 199 to State House Bill 119</p> <p>Position: OPPOSE the Resolution. The Coalition for LGBTQ+ Students supports LGBTQ+ youth through education, policy and advocacy. We oppose Resolution 7-23. We oppose this resolution because the integrity and efficacy of our educational system benefits from the requirement that local Boards of Education follow Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) curriculum frameworks. HB119 as amended requires local Boards of Education to conform to MSDE Curriculum Frameworks - such as Comprehensive Skills Based Health Curriculum, and other MSDE Curriculum Framework, as well other instructional programs. It ensures that schools teach information that is inclusive and historically accurate, including perspectives of people who are often excluded. We assert that this educational model best equips children to become thoughtful adults who can effectively navigate the world. Comprehensive Skills Based Health education is needed from K-12. It is essential for all students to have information on topics including gender and sexuality. Maryland's youth are intelligent and inquisitive. We should not avoid teaching certain topics because they are sensitive or controversial. Our youth will learn about these topics one way or another. Don't we want the best possible information about mental health, substance abuse prevention, sexuality and gender identity, to be taught by certified educators and based upon approved, evidence-based curriculum? By doing so, we encourage students to think critically, understand health issues fully and to make safe, responsible decisions. For LGBTQ+ students, comprehensive health curriculum helps them feel understood and included. LGBTQ+ youth are at higher risk of being bullied; they are also at higher risk for mental health problems including suicide. For all students, comprehensive education enhances awareness of the rich diversity in our communities, leading to greater acceptance and diminished bias. For some of our youth this is truly life saving. Some adults mistakenly believe that children should not obtain information about gender identity and sexuality until adolescence. However, child development research indicates that most children have a clear sense of their gender identity before kindergarten and that they have already received countless messages about gender and sexuality. Teaching these topics in elementary school does not cause confusion for children. It simply ensures that they are getting medically accurate, current, and age-appropriate information. Legislation requiring that local school boards adhere to the MSDE curriculum framework helps to ensure that the educational needs of all Maryland children are consistently being met. For all of these reasons, we oppose Resolution 7-23.</p>	

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

April 3, 2023

Dear County Council President and County Council Members,

I am writing in opposition to Bill 13-23  
An Ordinance concerning:  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

I oppose the amended bill as presented and I am asking the Council to add the following amendments

- **Would you please seek an amendment to restore the following statement that was removed from the current regulations concerning parade permits to proposed section 11-11-103 (A), on page 3, line 26? “THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT SHALL NOT INFRINGE ON THE FREEDOM OF THE RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE”**
- **Would you please seek an amendment to increase the minimum public assembly group size from 50 to 500 in section 11-11-101(8), on page 3, line 26?**
- If the current Department of Recreations and Parks (DRP) special events permit process will not be superseded by this bill, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, SPECIAL EVENTS TO BE HELD IN COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS BY CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THIS TITLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE CURRENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IN ITS SPECIAL EVENT AND CHARITABLE FUND-RAISING GUIDELINES.**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
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- If the current DRP special events permit process will be superseded by this bill, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-102(A), on page 3, by adding a second sentence at line 18 that states, THE CURRENT SPECIAL EVENTS PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IN ITS SPECIAL EVENT AND CHARITABLE FUND-RAISING GUIDELINES IS SUPERSEDED BY THIS TITLE**
- If the intent of the administration is to exclude regular season athletic games from the special events permit process, that intent would be clearer if regular season athletic games were specifically listed as an exception in section 11-11-101(9)(II) on page 3. **Would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, REGULAR SEASON TEAM SPORTS GAMES ARE NOT A SPECIAL EVENT.**
- If the current DRP process for issuing permits for sports tournaments will continue, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, RECREATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENTS TO BE HELD ON COUNTY AND SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THIS TITLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE CURRENT TOURNAMENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS.**
- If the current DRP process for granting tournament permits will be superseded, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-102(A), on page 3, by adding a second sentence at line 18 that states, THE CURRENT SPORTS TOURNAMENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IS SUPERSEDED BY THIS TITLE.**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
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- **Would you please seek an amendment to add a subsection 19 to section 11-11-104 (B), on page 5, after line 23 that reads, “THE COUNTY SHALL INCLUDE A HYPERLINK REFERENCE ON THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION THAT ACCESSES THE CRITERIA THE COUNTY WILL USE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SPONSOR’S PLAN ADDRESSING THE SITUATIONS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS 5 THROUGH 12 ARE ADEQUATE AND SUFFICIENT”?**
- **Would you please seek an amendment to add a second sentence to proposed section 11-11-104 (D), on page 5, line 41 that reads, “THE COUNTY SHALL INCLUDE A HYPERLINK REFERENCE ON THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION THAT ACCESSES THE CRITERIA THE COUNTY WILL USE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SPONSOR’S PLAN FOR SECURITY AND SAFETY IS ADEQUATE”?**
- **Would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, ANY EVENT SPONSOR THAT HAS RECEIVED A PERMIT FROM A COUNTY DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO THE ENACTMENT OF THIS TITLE FOR AN EVENT THAT WILL OCCUR AFTER ENACTMENT IS NOT REQUIRED TO SEEK A SPECIAL EVENTS PERMIT.**

The following pages contain my rationale as to why these proposed amendments would improve this bill.

Alan Lang  
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[Alanlang1@verizon.net](mailto:Alanlang1@verizon.net)

**Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

At the hearing on April 3, would you please ask the administration to discuss the following points and introduce the proposed amendments:

- Why was the following statement contained in the current regulation not included in the proposed bill?
  - 11-11-101(e) **Issuance.** The requirement for the license shall not infringe on the freedom of the right to assemble.
  - **Would you please seek an amendment to restore this statement to proposed section 11-11-103 (A), on page 3, line 26?**
  - For example, the amendment could be to change line 26 to read, “THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT SHALL NOT INFRINGE ON THE FREEDOM OF THE RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE. An application for a permit shall be:”
- What was the basis used by the Administration to define “Public Assembly” As a “... group of 50 or more persons collected together in one place for the same purpose.”? (11-11-101(8), Page 2, lines 36-37)
  - Why 50? Does a group that small really need to submit a plan showing how the sponsor plans to ensure the security of the special event and the health and safety of those attending? (11-11-103(b)(8), Page 3, lines 53-56)?
  - Would I need a security guard if I sponsor a class reunion picnic for 50 people who are 68 years old at Downs Park pavilion that holds 100? Would I need one if I had 100 people register to attend?
  - I believe at the March 20 hearing Mr. Volke asked whether 50 may be too low a threshold for requiring a special event permit.
  - **Would you please seek an amendment to increase the minimum public assembly group size from 50 to 500 in section 11-11-101(8), on page 3, line 26?**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

- How does this amended bill, that no longer charges an application fee unless the application is submitted fewer than 60 days in advance, affect the Department of Recreation and Parks (DRP) current permit process for special events, which charges application fees for charitable organizations to use County parks or trails for fund raising?
  - The current bill was amended to drop the application fee of \$50 and only charge an application fee of \$100 if the application is filed less than 60 days prior to the special event (11-11-105(A)(1) on page 6, lines 1-3.
  - The DRP charges charitable organizations that want to use County parks and trails for a special event an application fee and an attendance fee (See page 3 of the following form for the fee schedule)  
<https://www.aacounty.org/departments/recreation-parks/parks/trails/forms-and-publications/special-events-guidelines.pdf>
  - To clarify the relationship of the proposed bill with the current DRP procedures for special events, please state whether the current DRP special events permit process will continue or be superseded by this bill.
  - If the current DRP special events permit process will not be superseded, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, SPECIAL EVENTS TO BE HELD IN COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS BY CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THIS TITLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE CURRENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IN ITS SPECIAL EVENT AND CHARITABLE FUND-RAISING GUIDELINES.**
  - If the current DRP process will be superseded, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-102(A), on page 3, by adding a second sentence at line 18 that states, THE CURRENT SPECIAL EVENTS PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IN ITS SPECIAL EVENT AND CHARITABLE FUND-RAISING GUIDELINES IS SUPERSEDED BY THIS TITLE.**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

- How does this amended bill affect the DRP permit process for regular season athletic games held on County and school athletic fields?
  - Section 11-11-101(9)(I) attempts to describe which special events, including athletics, are subject to the permit process and lists 3 situations where, if any pertain, a permit is required (if the event is not held indoors). However, I believe the language is so vague that it is difficult to determine whether recreational sports such as football, soccer, field hockey, lacrosse, and baseball are subject to this special events permit process. If the games would be considered a special event, would the special event permit process be in addition to or replace the current DRP permit process?
  - These team sports games will probably meet the definition of a public assembly (group of at least 50 or more persons) when counting two teams of players and their respective parents and they would meet special event criteria number 1 as the games would require the “specific and exclusive use of ...other public property ...”. Thus, one could consider team sports games a special event depending on the interpretation of the “regularity and permanence throughout the year” clause on page 2, lines 40-41.
  - What is meant by the undefined phrase, “...does not have regularity or permanence throughout the year”? Do athletics need to have both “regularity” and “permanence” to be excluded from the special permit process, or just need one of them? These sports are seasonal, so they are played every spring or fall, which could meet the undefined “regularity” test, but do they meet the undefined “permanence throughout the year” test?
  - If the intent of the administration is to exclude regular season athletic games from the special events permit process, that intent would be clearer if regular season athletic games were specifically listed as an exception in section 11-11-101(9)(II) on page 3.
  - **Would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, REGULAR SEASON TEAM SPORTS GAMES ARE NOT A SPECIAL EVENT.**
  - If regular season games were to be interpreted as a special event, the permit process would be a nightmare to administer.

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

- How does this amended bill affect the DRP permit process for recreational sports tournaments held on County and school athletic fields?
  - Based on the definitions in this bill, it would seem that recreational sports tournaments held on county and school athletic fields would be subject to the special events process. However, the bill does not address the status of the current DRP process for granting sports tournament permits that it has done successfully for decades. Will the tournaments be exempt from the Special Events process and continue to use the DRP permit process, will the bill supersede the current DRP process for permitting tournaments, or will the Special Events process be in addition to the current DRP permit process?
  - To clarify the relationship of the proposed bill with the current DRP procedures for granting sports tournament permits, please state whether the current DRP special events permit process will continue or be superseded by this bill.
  - If the current DRP process will not be superseded, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, RECREATIONAL SPORTS TOURNAMENTS TO BE HELD ON COUNTY AND SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELDS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THIS TITLE AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE CURRENT TOURNAMENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS.**
  - If the current DRP process for granting tournament permits will be superseded, **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-102(A), on page 3, by adding a second sentence at line 18 that states, THE CURRENT SPORTS TOURNAMENT PERMIT PROCESS PROMULGATED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS IS SUPERSEDED BY THIS TITLE.**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
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- What are the criteria upon which County will base its decisions to deny, modify, or cancel special events permits?
  - Not stating the criteria in the proposed bill, or at least requiring the County to provide sources for the criteria in the permit application, allows the County broad leeway in deciding whose permits are approved or rejected, which could open the County to charges of favoritism. What may be the intent of the bill now, can change over time as administrations change. The event sponsors need to know where to find the criteria that will be used to review their permit applications.
  - In section 11-11-104(B) on page 4, lines 39-57 and page 5, lines 1-2, the bill lists 7 situations using the undefined terms of “inadequate” or “insufficient” that could prevent the issuance of a special event permit. These situations are:
    - Inadequate traffic facilities
    - Inadequate security or emergency response services
    - Inadequate venue [size]
    - Insufficient toilet facilities
    - Insufficient refreshment facilities
    - Insufficient ingress or egress for emergencies
    - Insufficient litter control and recycling procedures
  - Do the definitions for adequacy or sufficiency for these 7 situations exist, and if so, where can the sponsors find the criteria that the permit reviewers will use to determine the adequacy or sufficiency of these 7 situations? By having access to the criteria, the sponsors would have a better chance of creating plans that would comply with these 7 situations.
  - **Would you please seek an amendment to add a subsection 19 to section 11-11-104 (B), on page 5, after line 23 that reads, “THE COUNTY SHALL INCLUDE A HYPERLINK REFERENCE TO THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION THAT ACCESSES THE CRITERIA THE COUNTY WILL USE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SPONSOR’S PLAN ADDRESSING THE SITUATIONS DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTIONS 5 THROUGH 12 ARE ADEQUATE AND SUFFICIENT”?**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
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- In the permit review process, the County shall determine the adequate level of staffing for the special event based on “best practices and generally accepted public safety standards.” (11-11-104(D), Page 5, lines 39-41).
  - What is the source of these “best practices” and public safety standards?
  - To lessen the chances of having our permits rejected or being subjected to paying higher costs to use County staffing, shouldn’t this guidance be published?
  - I believe Mr. Volke requested that a resource cost matrix for using County staffing should be included in the bill.
  - Similarly, I believe the bill should require that the permit application contain a hyperlink to the guidance the County will use to determine adequate staffing.
  - **Would you please seek an amendment to add a second sentence to proposed section 11-11-104 (D), on page 5, line 41 that reads, “THE COUNTY SHALL INCLUDE A HYPERLINK REFERENCE TO THE SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION THAT ACCESSES THE CRITERIA THE COUNTY WILL USE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE SPONSOR’S PLAN FOR SECURITY AND SAFETY IS ADEQUATE”?**
- 
- Once this bill takes effect (45 days after it becomes law), what will become of any events that received a permit from DRP that would now be classified as a special event?
    - Would we need to apply for the special events permit, or would we be exempt?
    - **would you please seek an amendment to section 11-11-101(9)(II), on page 3, by adding a section 3 after line 10 (A funeral procession) that states, ANY EVENT SPONSOR THAT HAS RECEIVED A PERMIT FROM A COUNTY DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO THE ENACTMENT OF THIS TITLE FOR AN EVENT THAT WILL OCCUR AFTER ENACTMENT IS NOT REQUIRED TO SEEK A SPECIAL EVENTS PERMIT.**

Opposition to Bill 13-23, An Ordinance concerning  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events – Permitting

In addition to these suggested amendments, I believe the majority of my written testimony from March 20 is still germane.

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# Anne Arundel County: Bring your own bag!

## Did You Know?

**The world is facing a plastic pollution crisis.** Every year, our oceans take in an estimated 5 million to 13 million tons of plastic from land-based sources.<sup>1</sup> On our present course, there will be more plastic than fish (by weight) in the oceans by 2050.<sup>2</sup>

**Worldwide, shoppers use each year an estimated 1 trillion plastic shopping bags.**<sup>3</sup> Shoppers in Anne Arundel County use an estimated 215 million plastic carryout bags annually. These bags are among the top five plastic products collected in beach cleanups in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> At major grocery chains in Maryland that provide carryout bags, 75% to 89% of shoppers use single-use bags, nearly all of them plastic.<sup>5</sup> In Anne Arundel County in 2021, only 8% of grocery shoppers were using reusable bags; 85% were using single-use bags, nearly all of them plastic.<sup>6</sup> These bags have about a 15-minute “working life,” but persist in the environment beyond our lifetimes.

## Plastic bags pollute our waterways and pose a threat to wildlife and human health.

- Littered plastic bags end up in waterways, the Chesapeake, and the ocean, where they break up into small pieces and absorb toxic chemicals.
- Whether intact or as microplastic, plastic shopping bags are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. On land, plastic bag litter is a lethal threat to livestock and wildlife.
- Scientists estimate that people are ingesting as much as a credit card's worth of plastic weekly. The health effects on humans of microplastics, their additives, and the toxins they absorb are concerning.



Photo credit: Shutterstock

**Plastic bag laws change shopper expectations and behavior, and reduce plastic pollution.** Ten states and more than 500 localities in the U.S. have enacted bag laws, including Delaware.<sup>7</sup> Locally, four municipalities have banned plastic carryout bags (Chestertown, Laurel, Takoma Park, and Westminster); Montgomery and Howard counties have taxed carryout bags. A third set of jurisdictions has adopted a “hybrid” policy, banning plastic carryout bags and either taxing other carryout bags (Baltimore City, 5¢) or requiring retailers to charge and retain at least 10¢ for other carryout bags (Baltimore County, College Park, Easton, Salisbury) to encourage shoppers to bring their own bag or not take a bag at all.

## Hybrid plastic bag policies have proven most effective in shifting shoppers from accepting plastic and single-use paper bags to bringing reusable bags or taking no bag:

- After Baltimore’s ban on plastic carryout bags and 5¢ surcharge on paper bags went into effect, the share of shoppers using a reusable bag or no bag rose from 19% to 65%.<sup>8</sup>
- In San Jose, CA, a ban on thin plastic bags and a mandatory 10¢ minimum charge on paper bags (kept by the retailer) increased shoppers’ reusable bag use from 3% to 46%, and the share that took no bag from 13% to 43%.<sup>9</sup> Plastic bags in waterways declined by 76%.

**It's time for Anne Arundel County to incentivize reusable bags!**

## What the Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance Would Do:

The ordinance would aim to **change behavior** by...

- Prohibiting retailers from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale;
- Requiring retailers to charge at least 10 cents for other carryout bags and recording customers' bag charges on receipts, just as they do for other merchandise. Retailers retain the revenue to pay for the bags. It is not a tax: no revenue goes to the government; and
- Promoting use of reusable bags and requiring retailers to post the carryout bag policy in many languages at checkout and cart corrals

The ordinance would go into effect after a 6-month public education campaign and distribution of reusable bags to those in greatest need.



*Photo: Thomas Brewer*

## Why Not Just Recycle Plastic Bags?

Only about 5% of plastic bags are recycled. They are not accepted in curbside recycling programs because they foul the machinery and are too contaminated to be marketed. Even if the recycling rate could be improved, it would not prevent littered plastic bags from entering the environment. The best solution is to ban provision of single-use plastic carryout bags and incentivize use of reusable bags by requiring stores to charge for paper bags.

## Why Charge for Paper Bags?

### **Charging for other single-use bags is a financial incentive to switch to reusable bags.**

Shoppers may avoid paying by simply by bringing their own bag. The manufacture of paper bags results in millions of trees being cut down each year and relies on toxic polluting chemicals; after use, paper bags typically enter our growing waste stream.

**Paper and plastic carryout bags are not “free” to shoppers. Their cost is part of stores’ overhead, a hidden cost embedded in the price of merchandise.** The bill will reduce stores’ overhead; shoppers who want a paper carryout bag will pay for it, just as they pay for other merchandise, and those who bring their own bag will not. The charge is not a tax.

**Some Anne Arundel County grocery chains already do not offer plastic carryout bags and charge for paper bags.** All seven Aldi and Lidl grocery stores in Anne Arundel County do not offer single-use plastic carryout bags and charge for paper and reusable carryout bags: 54% of shoppers bring their own bag, 37% take no bag, and only 10% take a disposable bag.<sup>10</sup> Several big box stores offer no bags. Their customers benefit from lower prices for food and merchandise, since removing the cost of “free” carryout bags lowers the stores’ overhead. Shoppers at these stores don’t expect to be provided bags.

<sup>1</sup>Jambeck, Jenna et al. 2015. “Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean,” *Science* 347, no. 6223:768-771.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.weforum.org/press/2016/01/more-plastic-than-fish-in-the-ocean-by-2050-report-offers-blueprint-for-change/>.

<sup>3</sup>Laura Parker. 2018. “Plastic: We made it. We depend on it. We’re drowning in it,” *National Geographic*, June, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>5 Gyres Institute et al. Undated. “Better Alternatives Now: B.A.N. List 2.0.” Los Angeles, California.

<sup>5</sup>MD Sierra Club Shopper Surveys, 2019-2021 in 15 counties and the City of Baltimore.

<sup>6</sup>MD Sierra Club, 2021 Shopper Survey of Anne Arundel County (29 grocery stores, 4,095 shoppers).

<sup>7</sup>CA, CO, CT, DE, ME, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT, and WA have statewide bag laws; HI has a de facto statewide law because all counties have adopted ordinances. Source: [www.PlasticBagLaws.org](http://www.PlasticBagLaws.org).

<sup>8</sup>In three grocery chains - Giant, Harris Teeter, Safeway.

<sup>9</sup><https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/environment/illegal-dumping-litter/bring-your-own-bag-ordinance>.

<sup>10</sup>MD Sierra Club 2021 Shopper Survey, results for seven Aldi and Lidl stores in Anne Arundel County (428 shoppers).

March 31, 2023

COUNTY COUNCIL OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND  
Bill No. 13-23  
Licenses and Registrations – Special Events - Permitting

MEMO TO: County Council of Anne Arundel County  
FROM: Anna Chaney, Lothian, MD

Dear Chair Smith and County Council Members,

This is regarding the Special Events Bill, No. 13-23, that appears to have been crafted without transparency, without industry input, and without clear purpose, thus posing intolerable ambiguities, inconsistencies, and infringements upon our rights.

According to a conversation I had with Pete Baron and a separate conversation with Greg Swain, the purpose of this bill is to provide for safety measures for special events. However, the purpose of the bill as written does not list “safety”. Without a clear and accurate purpose, the contents of the bill may not clearly reflect the goals or intentions.

This bill contains ambiguous language that reflects a lack of due diligence, transparency, and accountability. I am unaware of any efforts to fulfill standard procedures whereby industry stakeholders (in this case the special event industry) and county residents are consulted and surveyed for input regarding potential legislation. Town Hall meetings, inclusive study groups, and outreach are commonplace in Anne Arundel County, yet, as a special event industry professional and a lifelong resident, I do not recall any attempt at these measures regarding Bill No. 13-23. It is with great concern that I read this bill.

I respectfully ask that you table Bill No. 13-23 and provide for a focused work study group. The group should be tasked to first pinpoint the clear and present needs of Anne Arundel County communities, citizens, businesses, non-profits, farms, heritage sites, and special event stakeholders, including county agencies with respect to “SPECIAL EVENTS” held within the confines of Anne Arundel County. This study should be conducted in a transparent, equitable manner, providing for inclusiveness with respect to race, gender, cultural ethnicity, background, religious or spiritual beliefs representative of the stakeholders involved in special events including all corresponding county agencies.

I am available for discussion, study, and to answer any questions. Thank you for providing the transparency, collaboration, and due diligence that is required for solid and prudent legislation impacting hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors of Anne Arundel County.

Following, I have detailed some of the inconsistencies, ambiguities, and perhaps inaccurate or unclear clauses, requirements, and processes included in AA Co. Bill 13-23.

Thank you,  
Anna Chaney 410 991 4304 Lothian, Maryland

## **KEY**

My notes are in **blue**.

Suggested edits, additions, or changes are in **red**.

These are listed in order by page of the bill as of March 30, 2023.

### **Page 1**

Purpose: Establishing a “uniform permitting process for special events”

I am confused as the existing permit process requirements are already established and in operation in Anne Arundel County for special events.

The stated purpose in the bill does not reflect the purpose as per the government officials involved in the crafting of this bill.

Additionally, the County Executive recently notified the citizens of Anne Arundel County that their voices were heard and that the county permitting process is deeply flawed. I propose that there is a clear permitting process for special events within the county already. It appears as though the administrative glitches or processes as referenced by the County Executive need to be cleaned up and streamlined before adding another layer of permitting to the cumbersome permitting processes for which our county has become known.

### **Page 2**

## **Article II LICENSES AND REGISTRATIONS**

### **11-11-101. Definitions**

(8) PUBLIC ASSEMBLY: I have heard rumors of an amendment to adjust the number of “Persons collected together in one place for the same purpose”. I am curious as to the mechanism in which this is to be accomplished. Will the definition of PUBLIC ASSEMBLY be changed or is it another mechanism?

(9) (I) “SPECIAL EVENT’ MEANS AN ACTIVITY, ATHLETIC EVENT, CONCERT, PARADE, OR PUBLIC ASSEMBLY, THAT DOES NOT HAVE REGULARITY OR PERMANENCE THOROUGHOUT THE YEAR, AND IS HELD ON A DESIGNATED DAY OR SERIES OF DAYS, WHETHER OR NOT ADMISSION IS CHARGED, FOR WHICH:

NOTE: This clause could unintentionally be interpreted to include weddings held only during certain seasons due to the wording “or permanence throughout the year”, for example, wedding venues that only host weddings in the spring, summer, and fall, but not “throughout the year”

**Page 3**

Article 11. (9) (II) SPECIAL EVENT DOES NOT INCLUDE:

1. AN EVENT HELD INSIDE A THEATER, CHURCH, SCHOOL, ASSEMBLY HALL, ARENA, SOCIAL HALL, GOVERNMENT FAICLITY, WEDDING VENUE, RESTAURANT, HOTEL BALLROOM, CONFERENCE CENTER, OR OTHER LIKE STRUCUTRUE IF THE STURCUTURE IS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BE SUED AS A PLACE FOR ASSMENBLY OF INDIVIDUALS.PROVIDED THE ANTICIPATED ATTENDANCE DOES NOT EXCEED THE ESTABLISHED LEGAL OCCUPANCY, OR
2. A FUNERAL PROCESSION
3. **Page 3**

The outdoor event venues should be listed as existing venues ARE outdoor Venues- add:

4. OUTDOOR EVENT VENUES SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO BE USED AS A PLACE FOR ASSMEBLY OF INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING OUTDOOR WEDDING CEREMONY SITES, OUTDOOR CHURCHES, AND OUTDOOR SPORTS ARENAS (SCHOOLS, NAVAL ACADEMY STADIUM)

**1) 11-11-103. Permit Application Requirements.**

The requirements listed herein appear incongruent with existing special event permits provided for in the county code – from the number of days in advance to the response time noted for a county response.

THIS SECTION NEEDS TO BE STUDIED AND CROSS-REFERENCED, CROSS-TIED WITH EXISTING CODE AND PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTES

**(A) Generally**

- 1) “IN A FORMAT PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT; **Vague notation – what does this mean exactly? Does this require an engineered drawing? This can be cost prohibitive. Which department? Who makes this decision?**
- 2) “EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECION (C). FILED AT LEAST 60 CALENDAR DAYS, BUT NOT MORE THAN ONE YEAR, BEFORE THE SPECIAL EVENT; AND “ **Is the requirement of not being submitted more than a year in advance standard practice for the county? What if the planning must begin more than a year in advance to be well designed with all safety measures considered.**

**(B) Contents.**

- (9) **Please add, “UNLESS THE VENUE OWNER IS THE EVENT SPONSOR”**

(C) **Alteration or waiver of filing deadlines.** ....”AND THE SPECIAL EVENT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTY” How is “in the best interest of the county” defined? What are the measurable qualifications? Who, what groups, agencies, entities, or individuals are making this determination? More clarity, transparency, and accountability is needed when using a subjective statement as this.

**11-11-104. Consideration of a permit application.**

**(B)Issuance. THE COUNTY SHALL ISSUE A PERMIT FOR A SPECIAL EVENT, please add a clause to protect the sponsor: WHICH ISSUANCE SHALL NOT BE UNDULY WITHHELD FOR ANY REASON, UNLESS:**

- (1) THE SPONSOR HAS OUTSTANDING MONETARY OBLIGATIONS TO THE COUNTY** This reads as discriminatory and punitive more so, as someone may be working to pay off a debt to the county by hosting an event. The county could put a lien on the event or require a garnishment of proceeds instead of precluding someone from hosting a special event within the county.
- (2) THE SPONSOR HAS ...VIOLATIONS REGARDING A SPECIAL EVENT IN ANOTHER JURISDICTION** has there been an incident that can be referenced here?
- (6) THERE ARE INADEQUATE TRAFFIC FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE THE ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF SPECTATORS OR PARTICIPANTS.** What is a traffic facility? This needs to be defined and listed in this legislation.
- (9) THERE ARE INSUFFICIENT OR SUBSTANDARD TOILET FACILITIES LOCATED AT THE VENUE** How is this measured? Clear, measurable qualifications and/or definitions are needed here.
- (10) THERE ARE INSUFFICIENT OR SUBSTANDARD REFRESHEMENT FACILITIES** What is a refreshment facility? This appears to be a qualification that does not apply to any other use in the county, including a new home build. What does this mean? How is this up to the county? If an event is not a good event, it will fail. This appears to be outside the scope of a regulatory government agency.

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(16) THERE IS A FULLY EXECUTED PRIOR APPLICATION FEE FOR A SPECIAL EVENT ON THE SAME DATE AND THE NECESSARY COUNTY RESOURCES ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR BOTH SPECIAL EVENTS; **please add a notation, “UNLESS OTHERWISE PROVIDED PRIVATELY BY THE SPONSOR”** The “NECESSARY COUNTY RESOURCES” leave too much ambiguity and should be clearly outlined in this clause for transparency and clarity of expectations

(D)Staffing. THE COUNTY SHALL DETERMINE THE ADEQUATE LEVEL OF STAFFING FOR THE SPECIAL EVENT BASED ON BEST PRACTICES AND GENERALLY ACCEPTED PUBLIC SAFETY STANDARDS. Is this a codified definition and will this be provided for by the county at the county's sole expense? This seems to be beyond the purview of the county. This is the county effectively telling a business how to run their business. The governments' job is not to run businesses for private business owners. Also, what county body is tasked with the judgement of determining and what are the clear measurements? I do not think this makes sense.

Page 6

**11-11-105. Application fees.**

(B)Fee exemption. THE COUNTY MAY EXEMPT A SPONSOR FROM PAYING AN APPLICATION FEE IF THE COUNTY DETERMINES THAT AN EXEMPTION IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTY. Who is determining this, what is the criteria? This reads subjectively without more transparency and information.

**11-11-106 Special service charges.**

(A)AS A SPECIAL SERVICE CHARGE, A SPONSOR SHALL REIMBURSE THE COUNTY FOR ALL COSTS INCURRED BY THE COUNTY FOR EQUIPMENT USAGE AND PERSONNEL SUPPORT OF THE SPECIAL EVENT, AS SPECIFIED IN SUBSECTION (C) Is a “special service charge” defined in the code? What is the current practice of the police and fire when it comes to proms, navy games, etc. ?

(B) Cost Estimate. PRIOR TO ISSUING A PERMIT, THE COUNTY SHALL PROVIDE THE SPONSOR WITH AN ESTIMATE OF COSTS THE COUNTY EXPECTS TO INCLUDE SUPPORTING THE SPECIAL EVENT BASED ON A PUBLICLY AVAILABLE STANDARDIZED RATE SCHEDULE FOR PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT. When is this posted and updated and as of what date will the applicable fees be locked in? At time of application?

**Page 6**

(E)Waiver of special service charges. THE COUNTY MAY WAIVE PAYMENT OF ALL OR A PORTION OF THE SPECIAL SERVICE CHARGES IF THE COUNTY DETERMINES THAT A WAIVER IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTY.  
Who is determining this, what is the criteria? This reads subjectively without more transparency and information.

**Page 7**

**11-11-108 Miscellaneous provisions.**

(A)Emergency Termination. IN ADDITION TO THE PROVISIONS OF 11-11-104 (C) THE COUNTY MAY REVOKE A PERMIT AND IMMEDIATELY TERMINATE A SPECIAL EVENT AT ANY TIME IF THE COUNTY DETERMINES THAT AN IMMEDIATE RISK TO THE HEALTH, SAFETY, OR GENERAL WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC OR PARTICIPANTS IN A SPECIAL EVENT EXISTS DUE TO:

- (1) MISREPRESENTATION OR MISMANAGEMENT BY THE SPONSOR,;  
OR Who would be determining a “mismanagement” ? It is not my understanding that the government’s purpose dictates the management of a special event. This is beyond the scope of the government.
- (2) CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND A SPONSOR’S REASONABLE CONTROL, INCLUDING WEATHER, A STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED UNDER TITLE 14 OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ARTICLE OF THE STATE CODE, OR A CIVIL EMERGENCY DECLARED UNDER 1-6-101 ET SEQ.OF THIS CODE. This needs discussion in a task force study group to provide clarity of intention and code references. This is a very open clause that allows for a broad interpretation. This needs clarification.



## Testimony on Bill No. 19-23 Ban the Bag Act

Date: April 3, 2023

Position: Support

Anne Arundel County Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Bill 19-23 to ban single-use plastic bags at retailers. My name is Anna Weshner-Dunning, and I am Oceana's Field Representative in Maryland. Oceana is the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation. We work toward science-based policies that will restore the ocean's abundance and biodiversity.

I am here to express our strong support for Bill 19-23. Plastic pollution is a growing threat to the world's oceans, as well as our food, health, and climate. Each year, an estimated 33 billion pounds of plastic enter the marine environment. This is roughly equivalent to two garbage trucks full of plastic being dumped into the oceans every minute.<sup>[1]</sup>

Residents of Maryland are concerned about this global crisis. In 2022, Oceana released polling data showing that 91% of Maryland voters are concerned about plastic pollution and its impact on the environment and our oceans, and 94% are concerned about single-use plastic products such as plastic bags.<sup>2</sup> We are ready for policies that will better protect our environment and our health by helping reduce the amount of single-use plastic products that are produced, used, and thrown away.

Policies governing the production and use of single-use plastic are the most effective way to stem the flow of plastic pollution into our oceans, rivers, and bays. These policies are becoming more common all around the world, including right here in Maryland, where Baltimore County, Montgomery County, Howard County, Chestertown, Takoma Park, and Westminster have all passed policies to reduce the use of single-use plastic bags. We urge you to do the same in Anne Arundel County.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Anna Weshner-Dunning  
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative, Oceana

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<sup>[1]</sup> Forrest A, Giacovazzi L, Dunlop S, et al. (2019) Eliminating Plastic Pollution: How a Voluntary Contribution From Industry Will Drive the Circular Plastics Economy. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 6: 627.

<sup>2</sup> <https://usa.oceana.org/maryland-plastic-polling/>



March 30, 2023

Hon. Peter Smith, Chair  
Anne Arundel County Council  
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Chair Smith and members of the County Council,

**The Anne Arundel County Sierra Club supports Ordinance 19-23, which aims to prevent plastic pollution and to incentivize use of reusable carryout bags in Anne Arundel County.** The bill would reduce environmental harms and waste from both plastic and paper single-use carryout bags, which in turn will reduce litter and greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change. It would achieve this by prohibiting retailers from providing single-use plastic carryout bags at the point of sale, and requiring retailers to charge and retain at least 10¢ for paper and other carryout bags, to create an incentive for shoppers to bring their own bag or not take a bag at all. The success of the policy hinges on its ability to change shopper behavior. The charge is retained by the retailer to finance the bags that are purchased; it is not a tax. In passing this bill, Anne Arundel County would join numerous other Maryland jurisdictions that have passed or are considering similar legislation.<sup>1</sup>

**The world is facing a plastic pollution crisis and plastic carryout bags are a major culprit.** Every year, our oceans take in an estimated 5 million to 13 million tons of plastic from land-based sources.<sup>2</sup> These bags are among the top five plastic products collected in beach cleanups in the U.S.<sup>3</sup> Single-use plastic carryout bags are lightweight and a major component of litter. Lifted by a breeze, they can float long distances until caught in fences, trees, and bushes. They are carried into streams, rivers, and the ocean, where they pollute the marine environment and eventually break down into microplastics. They are ingested by seabirds, fish, and marine animals, with fatal results. Microplastics move up the food chain to be ingested by humans. These plastic bags have about a 15-minute “working life,” but persist in the environment beyond our lifetimes.

**Shoppers in Anne Arundel County use an estimated 215 million plastic carryout bags annually.<sup>4</sup>** In 2021, 85% of Anne Arundel County shoppers at major grocery chains that provide complimentary carryout bags were taking them, nearly all of them plastic (Exhibit 1). Only about 8% of shoppers were using reusable bags. In contrast, at grocery chains like Aldi and Lidl that do not provide single-use plastic

<sup>1</sup> Jurisdictions in Maryland that have already passed a “hybrid” bring your own bag bill that pairs a ban on plastic carryout bags and a charge or tax for other carryout bags to incentivize shoppers to bring their own bag include Baltimore City and County and the municipalities of College Park, Easton, and Salisbury. Similar legislation is under consideration in Prince George’s County, Frederick City, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, and Laurel.

<sup>2</sup> Jambeck, Jenna *et al.* 2015. “Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean,” *Science* 347, no. 6223:768-771.

<sup>3</sup> 5 Gyres Institute *et al.* Undated. “Better Alternatives Now: B.A.N. List 2.0.” Los Angeles, California.

<sup>4</sup> Based on estimates of annual average daily use of one bag daily per person, multiplied by the County’s population. See Laura Parker. 2018. “Plastic: We made it. We depend on it. We’re drowning in it,” *National Geographic*, June, p. 40

carryout bags and that charge for paper and other bags, 90% or more of shoppers bring their own bag or don't take a bag (Exhibit 1). Some big box stores don't provide carryout bags at all, and all shoppers are obligated to bring their own bag.

**We cannot recycle our way out of the plastic pollution crisis, especially when it comes to plastic carryout bags.** They are not accepted for curbside recycling or at the County's recycling centers. Yet recycling machinery at sorting facilities continues to be fouled by plastic bags and film that are deposited in curbside bins, creating wear and tear on the machinery and costly clean up (Exhibit 2). The bags that are captured are too contaminated to be marketed. According to the EPA, fewer than 5% of plastic carryout bags are recycled. Even if the recycling rate could be improved, it would not prevent littered plastic bags from entering the environment.

**The policy model represented by Ordinance 19-23 is recognized as a “best practice” for reducing plastic pollution and changing shopper behavior.** It consists of a ban on plastic carryout bags that are not reusable, paired with a financial incentive for shoppers to switch to reusable carryout bags. The Ordinance sets the financial incentive as a charge of at least 10¢ for alternative bags (paper and other carryout bags) to be charged and retained by retailers.

**The Sierra Club’s shopper surveys document the superiority of this policy, compared with a ban on plastic carryout bags or, separately, a tax or charge for carryout bags (Exhibit 3).** They also support the case for a 10¢ charge for alternative carryout bags to maximize behavior change.

- The City of Laurel’s ban on plastic carryout bags without a charge for paper and other bags has resulted in a huge increase in the uptake of paper bags (Exhibit 3a). Six months after Laurel’s plastic carryout bag ban went into effect, the share of shoppers using reusable bags or no bag rose from 12% to 31%, while the share using paper bags rose from less than 1% to 68%. Paper bags are far more expensive than plastic bags; providing them at no charge raises the store’s overhead, which ultimately is passed on to all shoppers in higher prices.<sup>5</sup>
- In contrast, Baltimore’s ban on plastic carryout bags coupled with a 5-cent surcharge on paper and other carryout bags was far more effective in incentivizing reusable bag use (Exhibit 3b). The share of shoppers using a reusable bag or no bag rose from 19%, before the policy went into effect, to 65%.<sup>6</sup> This still left about a third of shoppers opting to pay the 5¢ surcharge for a paper bag, however, suggesting that a higher incentive would be necessary to achieve even higher adoption of reusable bags. It is still short of shopper behavior at Aldi and Lidl, where the cost of paper bags is now about 12¢, and 90% or more of shoppers opt not to purchase one.<sup>7</sup>
- Howard County’s 5¢ tax on plastic bags doubled the share of shoppers using reusable bags or no bag, from a quarter to half, but about a third of shoppers opted to pay the 5¢ tax and purchase plastic carryout bags (Exhibit 3c). Plastic carryout bags are not banned and plenty are still in circulation and being littered, even if more shoppers are bringing their own bag.

<sup>5</sup> The manufacture of paper bags results in millions of trees being cut down each year and relies on toxic polluting chemicals; after use, paper bags typically enter our growing waste stream. Laurel is in the process of updating its carryout bag ordinance to include an incentive to switch to reusable bags.

<sup>6</sup> In three grocery chains - Giant, Harris Teeter, Safeway.

<sup>7</sup> In San Jose, CA, a ban on thin plastic bags and a mandatory 10-cent minimum charge on paper bags (kept by the retailer) increased shoppers’ reusable bag use from 3% to 46%, and the share that took no bag from 13% to 43%. Plastic bags in waterways declined by 76%. See <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/environment/illegal-dumping-litter/bring-your-own-bag-ordinance>.

**The objective of the charge for other carryout bags is to produce behavior change in favor of reuse, not to make shoppers purchase bags.** Shoppers may avoid the charge simply by bringing their own bag or not taking one. Paper and plastic carryout bags are not “free” to shoppers. Their cost is part of a store’s overhead, a hidden cost embedded in the price of merchandise. Ordinance 19-23 will reduce overhead due to complimentary carryout bags.

**Ordinance 19-23 also takes into account equity concerns.** It invites universal participation for households of all economic status by ensuring that all are fully informed of the carryout policy and have access to reusable bags. This will be achieved by a public education campaign, by having retailers post the policy at checkout – in multiple languages – and through distribution of reusable bags to those in need by the County and other organizations. Retailers may promote reusable bags and offer them at no charge up to the launch date of the policy; thereafter, the bill provides for an annual 9-day promotion of reusable bags around Earth Day, during which retailers can offer them for free. Access to reusable bags from other sources is available year round. The charge to incentivize reusable bag use also promotes fairness across shoppers. Shoppers who want a paper carryout bag will pay for it, just as they do for other merchandise, while those who don’t take one won’t pay. The overhead due to carryout bags will be sharply reduced, and shoppers who bring their own bag won’t be subsidizing those who don’t.

**The Anne Arundel County Sierra Club respectfully requests that you again put Anne Arundel County in the lead among Maryland jurisdictions in reducing plastic pollution, litter, waste, and greenhouse gas emissions by passing Ordinance 19-23.**

Bernard Robinson, Zero Waste Lead  
Anne Arundel County Sierra Club Group

Martha Ainsworth, Chair  
Maryland Sierra Club Chapter Zero Waste Team

Attachments: Exhibits 1-3

## Exhibit 1

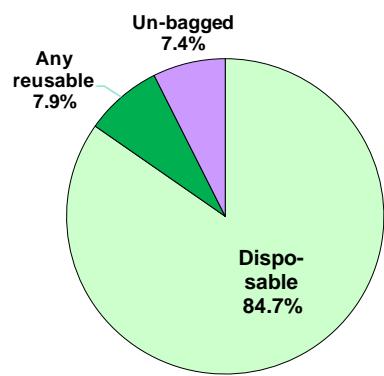
### Shoppers' Carryout Bag Use at Major Grocery Chains in Anne Arundel County, 2021

(Percent of shoppers exiting grocery stores according to the type of carryout bag taken)

## Anne Arundel County, 2021

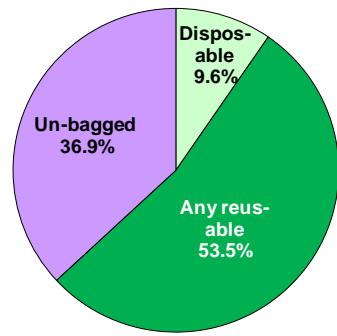
Distribution of shoppers by type of carryout bag used (percent)

Stores that offer "free" single-use plastic bags



Anne Arundel County, 2021  
(7 chains, 29 stores, 4,095 shoppers)

Stores that offer no single-use plastic bags  
and charge for other bags



Anne Arundel County, 2021  
(Aldi and Lidl chains, 7 stores, 428 shoppers)

Source: Maryland Sierra Club Shopper Survey, 2021

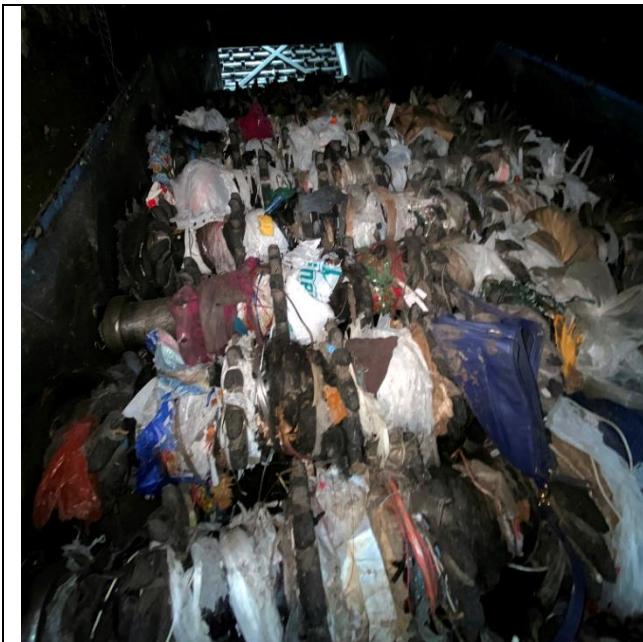
## Exhibit 2

### **The cost of plastic bag contamination at single-stream recycling facilities: Case study from Prince George's County**

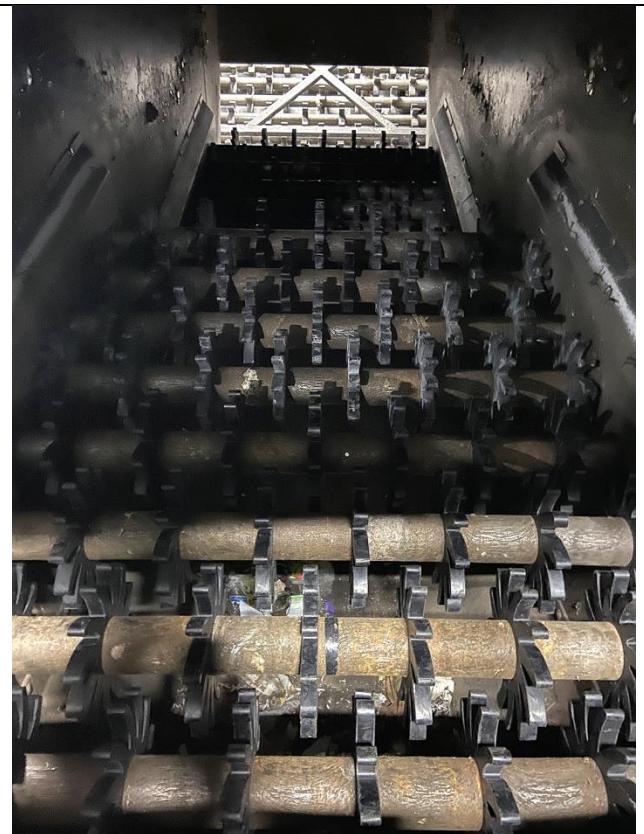
The Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) in Capitol Heights no longer attempts to recycle plastic bags because of their costly impact on the sorting machinery and the lack of a market for the highly contaminated product collected in the single-stream process. However, residents continue to put plastic bags and other plastic film in their curbside bins, which continue to foul the equipment. The plastic bags that are captured at the MRF are landfilled.

How much is this costing the County? Every day after the last shift, three workers spend 8 hours each cleaning plastic film from the sorting screens. The photos below show the impact on the sorting equipment as of the end of a shift (left) and the equipment after it is cleaned (right). At \$20/hour, five days a week, 52 weeks per year, the cost to the facility of cleaning plastic bags from the equipment is at least \$124,800 annually because of plastic bag and film contamination.<sup>8</sup>

**Fouled screens at the end of the day**



**The screens after cleaning**



Source: Sean Ryan, Maryland Environmental Service

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<sup>8</sup> Data are from 2019.

### Exhibit 3

#### The impact of carryout bag policy on shopper behavior in Maryland

(Percent of shoppers exiting grocery stores according to the type of carryout bag taken)

### Exhibit 3a

#### The impact of a ban on plastic carryout bags City of Laurel



Source: Maryland Sierra Club Shopper Surveys, 2019 and 2022.

### Exhibit 3b

#### The impact of a “hybrid” ordinance: Three chains\* in Baltimore City – plastic bag ban and 5¢ surcharge on other bags



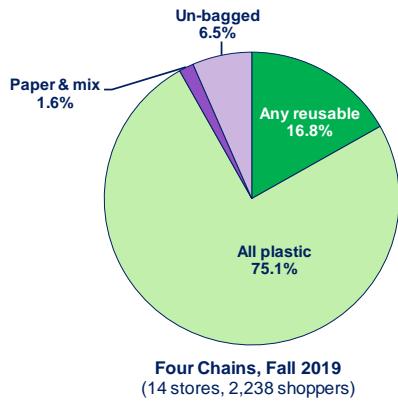
\* Giant, Harris Teeter, Shoppers

Source: Maryland Sierra Club Shopper Surveys, 2019 and 2021

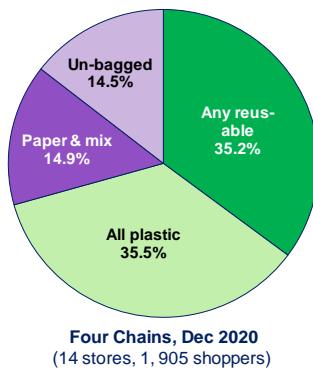
### Exhibit 3c

## The impact of a 5-cent plastic bag tax Howard County

Before the plastic bag tax



After the plastic bag tax



Source: Maryland Sierra Club Shopper Surveys, 2019-2020



31 March 2023

Dear Council Members –

The Anne Arundel Chapter, Sons of the Severn Barbershop Chorus is an educational, all-volunteer arts organization committed to advancing the cause of vocal music in our community. As a volunteer group, we depend on the support of our friends, patrons, and audiences to continue to bring excellent barbershop harmony entertainment to Anne Arundel County.

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and an active chorus since our founding in 1949, funds raised help to further our mission of preserving and advancing barbershop harmony, and supporting vocal music education programs in our schools and communities. As we come out of the pandemic, these funds are even more important as a lifeline to smaller arts organizations like ours as we rebuild our membership.

We have been involved with the MD. Renaissance Festival now for over 15+ years and have come to rely on the fundraising opportunity provided to us as a major source of income in support of the mission of our chorus.

Our partnership with Jules Smith and the folks at the Renaissance Festival is important to us and other non-profits. We have made valuable friendships through our time with them and gladly support their position on this legislation - BILL NO. 13-23a (As Amended).

Thank You for allowing me the opportunity to provide you this valuable feedback on behalf of our organization and in support of the Renaissance Festival.

Carl "Jay" Bansbach, President

Sons of the Severn Barbershop Chorus

Anne Arundel Chapter (J-003)

Barbershop Harmony Society

I am an octogenarian who has worn different hats over 35+ years at the Maryland Renaissance Festival.

First: Patron, detoxing after a hectic work week as an independent Government contractor.

Next: Wandering musician blessed by the looks of awe and the smiles on the faces of toddlers who heard and saw music coming out of living people for the first time, and the little children who would spin and dance and make their parents stop for a song or two, or three.

Now: For the last 14 seasons, provider of entertainment services in my friend's booth. Since official "retirement," proceeds from my work in the booth make it possible for me to keep my home, feed my critters, and pay for long-needed dental work.

Over the years I've observed the owners continually upgrade and update buildings and grounds, make positive changes regarding parking and traffic control, and always strive to improve the experience and safety of patrons, participants, and the surrounding community. If Bill #13-23a were to pass, MDRF should be exempted from its application.

Thank you for accepting and reading my comments.

Sincerely,



# Anne Arundel County: Bring your own bag!

## Did You Know?

**The world is facing a plastic pollution crisis.** Every year, our oceans take in an estimated 5 million to 13 million tons of plastic from land-based sources.<sup>1</sup> On our present course, there will be more plastic than fish (by weight) in the oceans by 2050.<sup>2</sup>

**Worldwide, shoppers use each year an estimated 1 trillion plastic shopping bags.**<sup>3</sup> Shoppers in Anne Arundel County use an estimated 215 million plastic carryout bags annually. These bags are among the top five plastic products collected in beach cleanups in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> At major grocery chains in Maryland that provide carryout bags, 75% to 89% of shoppers use single-use bags, nearly all of them plastic.<sup>5</sup> In Anne Arundel County in 2021, only 8% of grocery shoppers were using reusable bags; 85% were using single-use bags, nearly all of them plastic.<sup>6</sup> These bags have about a 15-minute “working life,” but persist in the environment beyond our lifetimes.

## Plastic bags pollute our waterways and pose a threat to wildlife and human health.

- Littered plastic bags end up in waterways, the Chesapeake, and the ocean, where they break up into small pieces and absorb toxic chemicals.
- Whether intact or as microplastic, plastic shopping bags are ingested by marine life, injuring and killing fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. On land, plastic bag litter is a lethal threat to livestock and wildlife.
- Scientists estimate that people are ingesting as much as a credit card's worth of plastic weekly. The health effects on humans of microplastics, their additives, and the toxins they absorb are concerning.



*Photo credit: Shutterstock*

**Plastic bag laws change shopper expectations and behavior, and reduce plastic pollution.** Ten states and more than 500 localities in the U.S. have enacted bag laws, including Delaware.<sup>7</sup> Locally, four municipalities have banned plastic carryout bags (Chestertown, Laurel, Takoma Park, and Westminster); Montgomery and Howard counties have taxed carryout bags. A third set of jurisdictions has adopted a “hybrid” policy, banning plastic carryout bags and either taxing other carryout bags (Baltimore City, 5¢) or requiring retailers to charge and retain at least 10¢ for other carryout bags (Baltimore County, College Park, Easton, Salisbury) to encourage shoppers to bring their own bag or not take a bag at all.

## Hybrid plastic bag policies have proven most effective in shifting shoppers from accepting plastic and single-use paper bags to bringing reusable bags or taking no bag:

- After Baltimore’s ban on plastic carryout bags and 5¢ surcharge on paper bags went into effect, the share of shoppers using a reusable bag or no bag rose from 19% to 65%.<sup>8</sup>
- In San Jose, CA, a ban on thin plastic bags and a mandatory 10¢ minimum charge on paper bags (kept by the retailer) increased shoppers’ reusable bag use from 3% to 46%, and the share that took no bag from 13% to 43%.<sup>9</sup> Plastic bags in waterways declined by 76%.

**It’s time for Anne Arundel County to incentivize reusable bags!**

## What the Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance Would Do:

The ordinance would aim to **change behavior** by...

- Prohibiting retailers from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of sale;
- Requiring retailers to charge at least 10 cents for other carryout bags and recording customers' bag charges on receipts, just as they do for other merchandise. Retailers retain the revenue to pay for the bags. It is not a tax: no revenue goes to the government; and
- Promoting use of reusable bags and requiring retailers to post the carryout bag policy in many languages at checkout and cart corrals

The ordinance would go into effect after a 6-month public education campaign and distribution of reusable bags to those in greatest need.



*Photo: Thomas Brewer*

## Why Not Just Recycle Plastic Bags?

Only about 5% of plastic bags are recycled. They are not accepted in curbside recycling programs because they foul the machinery and are too contaminated to be marketed. Even if the recycling rate could be improved, it would not prevent littered plastic bags from entering the environment. The best solution is to ban provision of single-use plastic carryout bags and incentivize use of reusable bags by requiring stores to charge for paper bags.

## Why Charge for Paper Bags?

### **Charging for other single-use bags is a financial incentive to switch to reusable bags.**

Shoppers may avoid paying by simply by bringing their own bag. The manufacture of paper bags results in millions of trees being cut down each year and relies on toxic polluting chemicals; after use, paper bags typically enter our growing waste stream.

**Paper and plastic carryout bags are not “free” to shoppers. Their cost is part of stores’ overhead, a hidden cost embedded in the price of merchandise.** The bill will reduce stores’ overhead; shoppers who want a paper carryout bag will pay for it, just as they pay for other merchandise, and those who bring their own bag will not. The charge is not a tax.

**Some Anne Arundel County grocery chains already do not offer plastic carryout bags and charge for paper bags.** All seven Aldi and Lidl grocery stores in Anne Arundel County do not offer single-use plastic carryout bags and charge for paper and reusable carryout bags: 54% of shoppers bring their own bag, 37% take no bag, and only 10% take a disposable bag.<sup>10</sup> Several big box stores offer no bags. Their customers benefit from lower prices for food and merchandise, since removing the cost of “free” carryout bags lowers the stores’ overhead. Shoppers at these stores don’t expect to be provided bags.

<sup>1</sup>Jambeck, Jenna et al. 2015. “Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean,” *Science* 347, no. 6223:768-771.

<sup>2</sup><https://www.weforum.org/press/2016/01/more-plastic-than-fish-in-the-ocean-by-2050-report-offers-blueprint-for-change/>.

<sup>3</sup>Laura Parker. 2018. “Plastic: We made it. We depend on it. We’re drowning in it,” *National Geographic*, June, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>5 Gyres Institute et al. Undated. “Better Alternatives Now: B.A.N. List 2.0.” Los Angeles, California.

<sup>5</sup>MD Sierra Club Shopper Surveys, 2019-2021 in 15 counties and the City of Baltimore.

<sup>6</sup>MD Sierra Club, 2021 Shopper Survey of Anne Arundel County (29 grocery stores, 4,095 shoppers).

<sup>7</sup>CA, CO, CT, DE, ME, NJ, NY, OR, RI, VT, and WA have statewide bag laws; HI has a de facto statewide law because all counties have adopted ordinances. Source: [www.PlasticBagLaws.org](http://www.PlasticBagLaws.org).

<sup>8</sup>In three grocery chains - Giant, Harris Teeter, Safeway.

<sup>9</sup><https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/environment/illegal-dumping-litter/bring-your-own-bag-ordinance>.

<sup>10</sup>MD Sierra Club 2021 Shopper Survey, results for seven Aldi and Lidl stores in Anne Arundel County (428 shoppers).



## INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE

### Written Testimony on Bill 6-23

Ann Arundel County Council

April 3, 2023

Members of the County Council,

My name is Erica Smith Ewing, and I am a senior attorney at the Institute for Justice. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in support of 6-23, which would allow Accessory Dwelling Units (“ADUs”) throughout the county. We strongly support the bill.

#### About the Institute for Justice

The Institute for Justice, also known as “IJ,” is a national nonprofit organization that protects constitutional rights. We have offices across the country and are headquartered in Arlington, VA. We often work in our neighboring state of Maryland and with Maryland residents. One of our areas of expertise is property rights, including zoning ordinances.

We have worked nationwide to help pass laws that would give people more freedom to use their own property in a way that would help support themselves and their families, without negatively affecting their neighbors. We have a particular interest in reforming zoning ordinances that contribute to the housing crisis. We have also brought several successful lawsuits against abusive zoning ordinances that violate people’s property rights.

You can see our work covered in media outlets across the county, including in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun* and Maryland local news and radio.

#### We Support Bill 6-23

We would like to supplement the oral testimony we submitted at the hearing on February 21 with three more points.

First, ADUs help make housing more affordable. This is true for both ADU owners, as well as renters who are looking for an affordable and safe place to rent. In our experience, ADU owners who benefit the most from renting out ADUs are vulnerable populations that would otherwise struggle to pay their mortgage, such as first-time home buyers, minorities, single moms, senior citizens, disabled persons, military members who have been deployed, and front-line workers such as nurses and school teachers. Similar population groups benefit from being able to rent ADUs—often in a safer neighborhood and more intimate setting than they would be able to afford in an apartment. And of course, ADUs are of particular importance to adult children who wish to provide their elderly parents a place to live near them.

Second, while the ordinance will create more housing opportunities, we expect it will do so at a slow and steady pace; it will *not* result in a dramatic and worrying increase in construction in residential neighborhoods. We have already observed this in the states that have passed state-wide ADU measures, such as California, Oregon, Utah, and Maine, as well as in cities that have recently legalized ADUs, such as Arlington and Alexandria,

Virginia (my own city). The reason the pace is slow and steady is because building an ADU can be a burdensome and expensive process (often in the \$150,000 to 300,000 range)—certainly worth the investment in the long run, but not for everyone. Thus, we expect that if this ordinance passes, it will result in people getting permits for existing structures or slowly starting to build new ones.

Finally, it bears noting that the ordinance would still require these structures to be regulated; this would not result in a wild west. ADUs would still have to follow local rules regarding construction, including rules for setbacks, height restrictions, and water and septic connections.

Thank you for your consideration.



Erica Smith Ewing  
Senior Attorney  
Institute for Justice

April 3, 2023 - Testimony on Bill 6-23

Greg Cantori  
105 Eastern Ave  
Annapolis, MD 21403

First, I want to start by again congratulating and thanking each county council person sponsoring, supporting, and making those housing-friendly amendments to this bill.

You didn't have to take this act of leadership, but you did.

The best our state legislators can muster at this point is to create a two-year Task Force to study ADUs... as the influential MACO and MML believe land use decisions must be made locally.

To your great credit, you are doing just that!

You have also recognized we are in a genuine housing crisis that cannot wait for more talk or studies.

This is a crisis that is harming our residents as they make tough decisions between paying rent or mortgage or food or utilities or moving or doubling up somewhere. The stress is very real with long-term negative impacts on their own health and their family's health and well-being. Little time is left for self-care, much less volunteering to help others.

Where we are allowed to live has everything to do with our quality of life and access to opportunities. ADU's are one tool towards that goal.

Bill 6-23 is a great start to more accessible permitting of ADUs in our county

However, If our goal is to increase our housing stock while providing owners more freedom over their property, I urge you to do even more.

**The reality is this: Very few ADUs will be created in the next few years after this bill is passed.**

## **Why?**

**First**, owners need to know that the new law even exists.

**Second**, owners need to:

- Find and arrange financing
- Find and get bids from an architect and a contractor,
- Review the many designs and iterations before approving the final one
- Work with their architect in getting stamped drawings completed,
- Navigate the rigorous, often confusing, permitting process,
- Endure the always challenging demolition, site preparation, noise, dirt, and inconvenience of construction in and around their home while they live there. Renovations are highly stressful for families.
- Ensure the inspections and financial draws process works smoothly
- Sign off and submit final payments along with getting occupancy permits
- Manage and maintain the unit when completed. (Whew!)

Only the most enthusiastic and dedicated owners will overcome these hurdles.

So I urge you to next take on **ADU 2.0** and move quickly in creating a smooth, barrier-free, ADU process to encourage homeowners to create them.

What might ADU 2.0 look like?

**We need to move from passively Permitting to vigorously Promoting ADUs.**

Beginning with the end in mind, let's get ADU bill 6-23 passed, and then let's get to work on ADU 2.0 by incentivizing and removing barriers to owners so we can create more new units.

Some examples include:

- Guaranteeing a 20-30 day turnaround on permits
- Creating and supporting an Advisory Casita Coalition (Small Home Coalition) of industry experts, loan officers, architects, advocates, builders,

remodelers, homeowners, renters, advocates for the disabled, and senior citizens, realtors, and policymakers such as yourselves to propose needed next steps while monitoring our county's ADU progress.

- Creating a designated ADU Advocate on staff in a Navigators office as the dedicated contact person to help homeowners (who are normally not experts in construction) navigate the entire finance, design, permit, build, and even management of their ADUs through providing key messaging and marketing with contact people, resources, links, and a list of companies with ADU expertise (Lenders, Architects, Contractors, and suppliers) An ADU One Stop Shop
- In addition to monitoring the number of new units created, help those with existing units come into compliance - Reach out and be a problem solver for them so they can have legal and safe units.
- By Promoting ADU 2.0 we can message our residents that we see them as essential partners in creating new housing units and we will do all we can to encourage them to create more. Moving us from just Permitting to actively Promoting ADUs 2.0 will also set a leadership action example for our entire state.
- Ensure our strategy of Promoting ADUs is part and parcel of our missing middle and other essential upcoming housing production strategies.
- Moving on to ADU 3.0: (Yes, of course, there's more to do!) Make allowances for Moveable Tiny Homes and Junior ADUs (as California has) to further increase our housing options. Add grant and loan programs to help lower-income owners create an ADU - Other states and counties have also set great legislative examples for us to consider.

Once we get ADU 1.0 done, let's move on to ADU 2.0, and then 3.0. Only then will creating ADUs be as easy as installing solar panels!

Congratulations from so many of us for your individual and collective leadership.

Greg Cantori

Greg Cantori is the owner of Little Deeds, an Anne Arundel County Aging in Place Handyman service, He is an Affordable and Tiny Home Advisor to the nonprofit Civic Works in Baltimore, Past President and CEO of Maryland Nonprofits and Bike Maryland, Past Director of Light Street Housing, The Marion I & Henry J Knott Foundation, and the Downtown Sailing Center



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April 02, 2023

### **Resolution 7-23: RESOLUTION urging the Maryland General Assembly to oppose House Bill 119 and any amendments to conform Senate Bill 199 to State House Bill 119**

#### **Position: OPPOSE**

Annapolis Pride's mission is to advocate for, empower, and celebrate our LGBTQ+ community in Anne Arundel County to live fully and authentically. Our vision is a safe, equitable, and anti-racist community where people of all identities can thrive.

As such, the Board of Directors of Annapolis Pride **enthusiastically supports** House Bill 119, which not only requires that Local Education Agencies provide comprehensive and inclusive health and sex education to students but also ensures that all students receive culturally responsive education that is inclusive, historically accurate—and values the dignity of all. By doing so, it brings attention to the contributions of historically marginalized groups that have shaped the history of our nation.

The importance of this legislation to me cannot be overstated – it ensures that those of us who have historically been marginalized have the opportunity to understand our own place in our communities and to celebrate who we are.

Students seeing themselves represented in the courses they take is critical. It validates their identity and provides them with a sense of belonging, while also helping to build their self-esteem and confidence. Furthermore, it strengthens their connection to their culture and history and provides them with a greater sense of pride in their history.

This legislation not only offers a mechanism for accountability, but it also serves as a powerful reminder that our schools are not only responsible for providing a world class education, but also a responsibility for the safety, health, and wellbeing of all students. The impact of this legislation extends beyond the classroom — by creating an environment of acceptance and inclusion, ultimately creating a more positive and productive learning experience. This legislation is a win for students, our schools, and our communities. It will ensure that our students are receiving a world-class education and it will serve as a safeguard for our schools and communities to ensure that our schools are held accountable for the instruction they provide.

**For these reasons, Annapolis Pride respectfully requests that the Anne Arundel County Council OPPOSE Resolution 7-23.**

Respectfully submitted,



Jaden T. Farris  
Board Member  
Annapolis Pride

To The Anne Arundel County Commissioners,

I am writing to request that the language in proposed Bill 13-23 be amended to allow the Maryland Renaissance Festival to operate without fear of permit denial or cancellation.

Many families, including mine, are dependent on the Maryland Renaissance Festival for their annual income. Loss of this event, in part or whole, would create financial hardship for people who rely on income as vendors, entertainers, management, security, food service, non-profits, and many other event-related jobs.

Personally, as a vendor and artist who resides in Maryland, I have invested time and assets for almost 40 years in this event. Any interruption or loss would be devastating to my family and my business.

For our patrons and local businesses, once travel and lodging are booked, reservations and weddings are scheduled and people make plans to participate in and attend an event of this size and status, it is devastating to face cancellation.

This amendment is important given the long-standing, good operating status of the Maryland Renaissance Festival, which hires its own security, traffic, health, and safety professionals.

This event has a proven record of accomplishment in Anne Arundel County for operating safely under all types of situations, including extreme weather events and other regional and national tragedies, from the DC sniper to 911, that have occurred during the festival over the many years of its operation.

Finally, having a place to go where a family can escape the 24-hour cycle of news in stressful times is vitally important.

I do understand the need for preparedness in emergencies and hope that Anne Arundel County will amend the language of proposed Bill 13-23 and continue to work as a partner to ensure the safety of the community, as well as the regular function of the Maryland Renaissance Festival.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jeanne Gibbons

Monday, April 3, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

In regards to Bill 13-23a Licenses and Registrations - Special Events - Permitting (amended), I am in opposition of this bill, and will be in attendance at the meeting.

I have been booth owner of a Specialty booth "Her Majesty's Healers" at the Maryland Renaissance Festival since 1983. My building at the festival and employee 4-6 local people, per year.

I am a home owner and live in Anne Arundel County, Crownsville MD, just two blocks from the festival ground since 2000. I have worked as a Licensed Dental Hygienist in MD since 1976.

Locally, in the 2000's in Annapolis. I later attended a 600 Massage Therapy School in MD in 1982-3 with a dream of bringing nature and nurture together to serve the community. I was one of the first to take the Exam and become Licensed as a Massage Therapist in the State of Maryland and have been an outreach for hundreds of massage therapists, over the decades. providing services at my booth. We also have retail sales of minerals, rocks, and fresh dipped incense. Both aspects of the business within the Maryland Renaissance Festival are responsible for 40-50% of my income annually to support my family.

I am proud to have been a long-term booth owner and working with the best Owners/family there could be, The Smiths. They do everything they can to make this an incredible event in Anne Arundel County, and provide in all aspects in regard to safety and care of all of us, the patrons, the grounds and the community.

I have also been an active member of the Annapolis Lodge of the Sons of Italy 2225, for the past decade.

In support of opposition to this bill.

Jeanne' S. Berger, Booth Owner  
Her Majesty's Healers [www.hermajestyshealers.com](http://www.hermajestyshealers.com)  
[incrabtownz@me.com](mailto:incrabtownz@me.com)

Honorable members of the County Council;

I urge you to oppose Resolution 7-23, a RESOLUTION urging the Maryland General Assembly to oppose House Bill 119 and any amendments to conform Senate Bill 199 to State House Bill 119.

Providing the highest quality education for the children of Maryland and specifically Anne Arundel County should be of utmost importance, and beyond the field of reckless partisan games.

House Bill 119 originally was to mandate the Maryland State Department of Education Comprehensive Health Education framework across the state. However, it immediately fell under partisan fire from hate groups such as the so-called Moms for Liberty, where they spread lies such as the comprehensive health framework promoted “gender ideology,” amongst other things.

Due to that negative feedback, and realizing that unfortunately too many Boards of Education have partisan bigots as their members, the author moved to ensure that, in her own words, “bad actors” could not continue to negatively impact our children’s education. As such, the improved HB 119 mandates that each board of education fully implement MSDE curriculum or face financial consequences.

In order to ensure the quality of education in Maryland, and to keep our children safe from the partisanship, racism and bigotry of such anti-American groups as Moms for “Liberty,” we should help this legislation pass.

I realize the implementation table, becoming law on July 1, 2023, is out of step with the current Anne Arundel County Public School system schedule for course update and refresh and, as such, this may cause some consternation and concern from people who are otherwise not “bad actors”.

I expect that working honestly and earnestly towards compliance, particularly in the first few years, would be sufficient for “good actors” to not suffer consequences.

John Jasen  
Pasadena, MD



## CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Saving a National Treasure

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April 3, 2023

To: Anne Arundel County Council

Chesapeake Bay Foundation submits this letter in support of Ordinance # 19-23, which would prohibit retailers from providing customers single use disposable plastic bags at point of sale.

Plastic bags pollute our communities, clog our storm drains and streams, and harm plants and animals. Like other plastic products, plastic bags are almost always made from fossil fuels. They contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental justice concerns at every stage of production and disposal, worsening the climate crisis, and they cannot be effectively or efficiently recycled.<sup>1</sup> Single-use plastics are an ongoing tragedy for our waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, where they choke the life from fish and marine mammals. And the damage doesn't stop there: Like other single-use plastics, bags break down into harmful microplastics that threaten wildlife up and down the food chain, including humans, who on average, consume up to five grams of plastic per week, which is equivalent to the weight of a credit card.<sup>2</sup>

Anne Arundel County is lucky to have over 533 miles of shoreline<sup>3</sup>, but with great fortune comes great responsibility to be good stewards of our resources and special places. Banning single-use plastic bags is an important upstream solution that protects our people and environment and helps build toward a zero-waste future. Anne Arundel County can join a growing list of jurisdictions across Maryland, the U.S., and the world in reducing plastic pollution by banning plastic bags.

### Plastic Bags Threaten Our Environment, Economy, and Health

Alarmingly, a 2019 survey found microplastics in every water sample taken in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.<sup>4</sup> Beyond the detrimental impacts to animal and human

<sup>1</sup> "Plastics: Material-Specific Data." EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, 3 Dec. 2022, <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/plastics-material-specific-data>.

<sup>2</sup> Senathirajah, Kala, et al. "Estimation of the Mass of Microplastics Ingested - a Pivotal First Step towards Human Health Risk Assessment." *Journal of Hazardous Materials*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, 15 Feb. 2021, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33130380/>.

<sup>3</sup> "Waterfront Homeowners Guide: Anne Arundel County, MD." Anne Arundel County Maryland, <https://www.aacounty.org/departments/public-works/wprp/education-outreach/waterfront-homeowners/>.

<sup>4</sup> Murphy, R., et al. "Microplastics in the Chesapeake Bay and Its Watershed: State of the Knowledge, Data Gaps, and Relationship to Management Goals." STAC, Chesapeake Bay Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee, 11 Oct. 2019, [https://chwacesu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FINAL\\_STAC-Report\\_Microplastics.pdf](https://chwacesu.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FINAL_STAC-Report_Microplastics.pdf).

health, these plastics have a costly impact. In many urban and suburban areas, plastic bags and other litter can clog storm drains, resulting in increased flooding and costly cleanup or repairs to stormwater infrastructure. Taxpayers also pay a high price for litter cleanups along roadways; in Maryland, the Department of Transportation spends more than \$7 million on these programs annually.<sup>5</sup>

Some of the most significant industries that drive the economy throughout the Bay watershed—agriculture, fisheries, and tourism—are also negatively impacted by plastic pollution. NOAA found that Maryland could lose millions of visitors and hundreds of millions in tourism spending if marine debris is left unchecked.<sup>6</sup> And while the seafood industry in Maryland contributes nearly \$600 million to the state’s economy and provides thousands of jobs, livelihoods are threatened by polluted waterways and declining populations of fish species and crabs.<sup>7</sup>

The problem seems insurmountable and simple all at the same time—just do away with single-use plastic bags. But it is not that simple.

## Benefits of a Plastic Bag Fee

Banning single-use plastic bags is often ineffective at reducing plastics because many guidelines still allow for paper and reusable bags to be offered. Unfortunately, a plastic bag is often defined as reusable if it is 2.25 millimeters thick, so retailers can provide thicker plastic bags to avoid removing them from their stores.<sup>8</sup> Charging a fee for plastic bags encourages behavior change, and has proven effective at reducing the number of bags used in cities like Washington, D.C., which has had a fee in place since 2010 and has seen a 75 percent reduction in the number of plastic bags found in trash traps along the Anacostia River.<sup>9</sup>

Where financial burdens are a concern, some communities have elected to use fees collected to provide reusable bags to residents challenged by the ban. Others have exempted residents who qualify for assistance programs from charges. One of the most challenging hurdles for localities to overcome is the current state of the economy. Increased expenses resulting from inflation are weighing on many Americans, and localities are hesitant to enact an additional fee at this time. It’s a nuanced situation to navigate, but it’s important to remember that shoppers can opt out of

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<sup>5</sup> “MDOT Launches Anti-Litter Campaign Urging Marylanders to Eliminate Trash on State Roadways.” *Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)*, 24 Aug. 2022,

<https://mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/newsroomdetails.aspx?newsId=624&PageId=38>.

<sup>6</sup> “When Beaches Are Trashed, Who Pays the Price?” *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)*, 26 Sept. 2019, <https://www.noaa.gov/multimedia/infographic/when-beaches-are-trashed-who-pays-price>.

<sup>7</sup> “Maryland at a Glance: Seafood Production.” *Maryland State Archives*, 16 Aug. 2022,  
<https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/mdmanual/01glance/html/seafoodp.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Romer, Jennie. “Plastic Bag Law Activist Toolkit for U.S. Cities & States.” *Surfrider Foundation*, Jan. 2019,  
[http://publicfiles.surfrider.org/Plastics/Plastic\\_Bag\\_Activist\\_Toolkit\\_2019.pdf](http://publicfiles.surfrider.org/Plastics/Plastic_Bag_Activist_Toolkit_2019.pdf).

<sup>9</sup> Sol Warren, Michael. “Pay Attention, N.J.: Here’s What Happened in D.C. When It Taxed Plastic Bags.” *NJ*, 17 July 2018, [https://www.nj.com/news/2018/07/how\\_will\\_bag\\_fees\\_fare\\_in\\_nj\\_dc\\_may\\_have\\_the\\_answer\\_1.html](https://www.nj.com/news/2018/07/how_will_bag_fees_fare_in_nj_dc_may_have_the_answer_1.html).

paying any additional fees by bringing reusable bags along to the store or declining to use a bag when it's unnecessary.

Plastic bags aren't just a nuisance, they're a health hazard. The Chesapeake Bay watershed is home to more than 18 million people and 3,600 species of plants and animals, all of which are threatened by continued plastic bag use. Elected officials from local to federal levels should work to remove them from the market and usher in more sustainable products and practices in a way that considers the needs of all.

Thank you for your time and attention on this important matter. Chesapeake Bay Foundation is at your service for any further inquiries.

Sincerely,

Julieta Rodrigo  
Urban & Community Resilience Manager  
Chesapeake Bay Foundation  
[jrodrigo@cbf.org](mailto:jrodrigo@cbf.org)

**County Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland**  
**Ordinance 19-23 Public Safety - Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County**  
**April 3, 2023**

Good afternoon, Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Pickard, and members of the Anne Arundel County Council. My name is Karen Kalla. As a resident of Anne Arundel County, I strongly encourage you to vote in favor of ordinance 19-23. Thank you, council members Ms. Rodvien, Ms. Hummer, and Vice-Chair Pickard for introducing this necessary bill.

Bill 19-23 would prohibit a retail establishment from providing plastic carryout bags to a customer and charge ten cents for each paper and reusable carryout bag that it provides. Exemptions include pharmacist bags that contain drugs and plastic bags for bakery items, fruits, vegetables, raw meat, and seafood.

This is a sensible and long overdue step in a comprehensive approach to protecting the environment. Anne Arundel County residents use an estimated 215 million plastic bags per year and Marylanders use 2.2 billion per year. The harm to the environment—air, land, fauna, flora, and aquatic life from the production, use, and disposal of plastic bags is well documented. Also well documented is the fact that prohibiting plastic carryout bags effectively reduces the use of disposable bags. For example, in Anne Arundel County grocery stores that do not offer single use plastic carryout bags and charge for other bags, only 9.6% of customers choose disposable bags. Consumers quickly learn to bring their own reusable bags and develop a new environmentally conscious habit. In Puerto Rico and many European regions where I have traveled, plastic is not an option and customers bring their own bags or boxes, purchase bags, or use none at all. There are no other options. This is absolutely critical to protecting the health of our communities, both human and natural and *it is an easy and proven practice*.

According to the Anne Arundel County of Public Works, the county “consists of 12 primary watersheds and hundreds of sub-watersheds and all of them discharge directly into the Chesapeake Bay. Therefore, the activities that occur in Anne Arundel County have a direct impact on the Chesapeake Bay.”

Anne Arundel County’s juxtaposition with these waterways compels each citizen to work individually and with its local governments to protect these precious resources and respect their role in and value to the natural world, cultures, and economies near and far.

The use of reusable carryout bags is a well-established practice in other counties in Maryland, across the country, and beyond our mainland. It is Anne Arundel County’s time to join with others in this effort to maintain the health of resources on which our individual and collective well-being depends.

For these reasons and the many others presented to you on behalf of this bill, I respectfully ask for your support of Bill 19-23 Public Safety – Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County.

Karen Ann Kalla  
2004 Quay Village Court, #101  
Annapolis, Maryland 21403/301.741.0324



Anne Arundal County Bill 13-23, Comments April 3.2023

I am a Maryland small business owner/artist whose art work is sold exclusively from my merchant shop at Maryland Renaissance Festival (MDRF) for thirteen years. MDRF represents a majority of my annual income and losing part or all if it would have a significant financial impact. Knowing the multi-day Special Event will open and close on set dates is critical for art work preparation and procurement of raw materials in advance. Uncertainty of opening or being cancelled on short notice will have an overall negative impact.

MDRF operates the business year-round to ensure the proposed bill's permit considerations are exceeded through employment of their own staff in addition to ongoing facilities mgmt. These include but not limited to security, EMTs, adequate toilet facilities, food and beverage facilities, litter control, parking, and points of ingress/egress. They also work with all participants to insure we comply with all State and County fire, electrical, health department, liquor regulations, and inspections. Tickets are purchased only online in advance. Cancelling the event with little notice would significantly impact all attendees and MDRF.

I believe not opening or limiting the number of days open would have significant negative impact on local and state revenue due loss of applicable food and beverage tax, merchandise sales tax, ticket sales taxes etc. not to mention the surrounding community merchants. MDRF should be grandfathered due prior special zoning exception.

Thank you considering my comments as you consider Bill 13-23.

## Apr 03, 2023 County Council Meeting - Comments RE: Bill 6-23 - ADU's

My name is Kurt Svendsen, I live in Arnold. This is the third time I am testifying in relation to this Bill. In my initial testimony, I noted that I wholeheartedly supported the sentiment expressed by an Annapolis resident at your February 1st hearing. I'll read a key snippet again (emphasis added):

"I want you to go from just permitting them to promoting them. Promoting them means that you actually are going to be asking the homeowners to take an active role in our housing issue and it means things like low-interest loans, grants for people with lower incomes — ***lower-income homeowners*** as well as ***lower-income renters***."

One of my chief concerns with this Bill is that there is nothing in this legislation that targets the moderate, low, and very low income population most in need. The supporters of this Bill keep emphasizing "flexibility." The flip-side of that coin is "unintended consequences."

Some have suggested this be adopted as a "pilot" measure (i.e., with a sunset clause). But, my reading of this legislation and review of the minimal information that has been made publicly available regarding the research and preliminary deliberation undertaken in developing this legislation offers no hint as to what might constitute success...other than "more ADUs = good, less ADUs = bad."

My follow-up testimony took issue with the characterization of citizen concerns as "privileged" and "insensitive." I think such characterizations are counter-productive, and fail to recognize a very real cultural and systemic problem that lies at the root of the mistrust and anger that so often erupts and frustrates all involved. That is, important and complex matters are not being approached as opportunities for "co-creation." That type of community engagement seeks input BEFORE legislation is even drafted; certainly before it's introduced.

In response to my latest testimony I've been told that the County Council does not have the resources to support this type of citizen engagement; that such a process takes additional time and staffing of which we have none to spare. I have two responses to that:

1. The County Council has complete authority over the level of appropriation requested, proposed, and approved for the Legislative Branch.
  - o See paragraph 4 of March 6 County Council testimony: Budget Primer Part 1 of 5.
2. Transparency and proactive disclosure don't require a lot of resources.
  - o This was literally the title of an article by the Maryland PIA Ombudsman back in 2019:  
<https://news.maryland.gov/mpiaombuds/2019/01/28/proactive-disclosure-saves-time-and-money-and-its-the-law/>

As an example, I've been highlighting the absurdity that my request for the membership of an APF Work Group that has been meeting for over two years is being treated as a formal Maryland Public Information Act request (MPIA 157167). I'm pleased to report that in response to my request, I was recently granted view access to the Google Share Drive containing the public records pertaining to the work of this group, including the [agenda and summary of all 13 meetings](#), a video recording of a key presentation ([YouTube link to "process" portion](#)), as well as lots of other data and analysis reports. I think this information should have been publicly shared throughout the past 2+ years, as it was for a select group of 64 people (but only one Council member) as of 3/22/2023. All of these files are now fully available to anyone with an internet connection via my Google Site: AACountyCitizenShare

I am Nancy Barry, owner of Epiphany Designs, Maryland Renaissance Festival. I am a 40+ year participant of the festival and an original booth owner at the Crownsville Rd site where I sell stained and fused glass.

I oppose Bill13-23a. I oppose the language stating that an event or part of a multi-day event can be cancelled immediately Closing an event or denying a permit 14 days before scheduled opening would cause negative economic impact on the area and numerous participants who have committed to the event. .

Maryland Renaissance Festival should be granted an exception to this amendment. The Festival has been a Special Event since 1985 , has undergone 2 zoning processes currently granting 9 weekends of operation, has met license and permit requirements, provides its own first aid, security and parking personnel Festival staff works year round addressing permits, licenses, improvements to the site Additionally, booth owners have committed their time , thousands of dollars to inventory and a booth, yearly booth fees and improvements meeting inspection requirements and to living arrangements for our 9 weekends at Revel Grove. Many participants depend on the sales from the Festival for most or all of their income as does the full-time staff. Several thousand support workers also depend on returning each year to add to their income. Taxes from ticket sales, foods , beverages and products sold at the 140+ craft booths, crew salaries, restaurant meals and lodging paid by out of the area patrons all contribute economically at both local and state level. Maryland Renaissance Festival is a positive and valued member of the community

Nancy Barry

Millers, MD

I am writing in support of a plastic bag ban in Anne Arundel County. Plastic is forever! Plastic bags clog our waterways, causing financial loss to fishermen, crabbers and oystermen. Plastic sits on the floor of the Chesapeake Bay, causing shifts in both fauna and flora. Birds, turtles, large fish, and other wildlife ingest the plastic bags, killing them. When the bodies degenerate, the plastic is released back into the environment. Plastic never "dies". It breaks down into microparticles ingested by fish, crabs, birds and humans! Plastic bags can be seen in nests!

It's time we took a stance about plastic pollution. A plastic bag ban is a start!

Nancy M. Bromberg, VMV, MS, DACVO

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April 3, 2023

The Honorable Peter Smith  
Chair, Anne Arundel County Council  
44 Calvert Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Bill No. 19-23 – Ban the Bag Act of Anne Arundel County - Support**

Dear Chair Smith and members of the Anne Arundel County Council,

On behalf of Chesapeake Conservancy, I would like to express our organization's support for the proposed legislation Bill 19-23 currently pending before the council.

Anne Arundel County is fortunate to be a 'gateway' to the Chesapeake Bay, and county residents and visitors benefit from outdoor recreation and tourism related to the Bay and its rivers.

As this council knows, the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers has long been impaired by excess nutrient runoff and by land use change; however, it is increasingly clear in the Chesapeake Bay, in other major bodies of water and in our oceans that plastic pollution is a major threat to wildlife, aquatic habitats and water quality. In a 2021 article, the Bay Journal reported that a recent survey of 'four tidal tributaries to the Bay found microplastics in 59 out of 60 samples of various marine animals.'<sup>1</sup> Microplastics ingested by aquatic species can damage organs, compromise immune functions and reduce growth and reproduction.

Bill 19-23 would follow the example of many jurisdictions around the country, including in Maryland, to ban plastic bags and to implement financial incentives that would encourage the use of reusable bags, in an effort to reduce plastic waste and pollution.

The Chesapeake Bay and its seafood are major components of tourism in Anne Arundel County and are cornerstones of our region's economy. This legislation would directly benefit the health of the Chesapeake Bay and our watershed by substantially reducing a significant source of plastic pollution – plastic bags – from the county. I urge you to advance and pass this legislation, for the benefit of your constituents, of Anne Arundel County's environment and of the Chesapeake Bay.

Sincerely,

Joel Dunn  
President and CEO  
Chesapeake Conservancy



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[facebook.com/aarpmd](https://facebook.com/aarpmd)

## County Council of Anne Arundel County

### Legislative Session 2023

Bill No. 6-23

April 3, 2023

My name is Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. On behalf of AARP Maryland and its more than 870,000 members, we write to submit comments in support of **Bill No. 6-23 Subdivision and Development – Zoning- Accessory Dwelling Units**. The Accessory Dwelling Units bill as written establishes the accessory dwelling units as an accessory use in certain zoning districts. Additionally, under the new ordinance, a maximum of one accessory unit could be established per lot either within an existing primary structure or in a separate accessory structure. Each unit would be a maximum of 1000 square feet of livable space and a separate entrance. We thank Councilwoman Rodvien for introducing this important legislation.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps empower people to choose how they live as they age, strengthens communities, and fights for the issues that matter most to families, including the promotion of livable communities.

By 2030, one in five Americans will be age 50 and older. It is critical that communities address their range of needs now. According to AARP's 2018 Home and Community Preferences survey<sup>1</sup>, nearly 80% of adults age 50 and older want to remain in their communities and homes as they age. Approximately one in three adults report that major modifications to their home are needed to accommodate aging needs. In addition, although, the presence of accessory dwelling units is low, seven in ten would consider building one for a loved one who needs care.

The country is also experiencing a shift in demographics and needs. Currently, the largest demographic, at 28 percent, is single adults who live alone.<sup>2</sup> This will require creating more livable communities for people of all ages with affordable and accessible housing options,

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<sup>1</sup> AARP, *2018 Home and Community Preferences: A National Survey of Adults Age 18-Plus*, <https://www.aarp.org/research/topics/community/info-2018/2018-home-community-preference.html>.

<sup>2</sup> AARP, *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America* (2018), <https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/livable-documents/documents-2019/making-room-web-singles-010819.pdf>.

Real Possibilities

transportation options (with particular focus on the needs of pedestrians), and amenities people want within walking distance.

It is no secret that Annapolis is facing an unprecedented housing shortage and affordability crisis especially for older residents. The magnitude of housing challenges for low and moderate-income residents signals a problem in Maryland that deserves solutions that are both driven by increasing the supply of diverse housing options and land use policies. The 9-21 Ordinance is not the only solution to this issue but can be one tool in the toolbox to help alleviate the concern.

AARP believes the bill No. 6-23 offers a reasonable policy that will increase the supply of affordable rental housing for our members currently priced out of the market. Diverse housing options for older adults looking to downsize in their current community, and housing suitable for the caregiving of an older relative while providing them with the independence they desire. Creating more housing options in locations closer to transportation, jobs, shopping, and in communities where people have their support system of healthcare providers and family and friends is vital as we age.

AARP applauds the proposed bill and believes it is a step in the right direction to addressing the need for more housing that is affordable and meets the needs of our residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to allow AARP to comment on this important matter. If you have questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at 410-302-8451 or by email at [tbresnahan@aarp.org](mailto:tbresnahan@aarp.org).

April 2, 2023

Thomas & Vicki Bailey  
on behalf of Page After Page, LLC

County Council of Anne Arundel County, MD  
Testimony to Bill No. 13-23 Amended March 20, 2023

Dear Mr. Smith,

My wife and I, residing at 506 Lisa Ave., Odenton, own Page After Page bookstore (a small indie woman and veteran owned business), that operates during the Maryland Renaissance Festival (MDRF). We submitted testimony to the original bill (see our March 18, 2023 letter) and now provide further thoughts concerning the proposed amendments to Bill 13-23.

We respectfully disagree with the original and amended form of this proposed bill. Although the intention to address possible and future concerns is laudable, there are too many items within this bill that are unclear, undefined, unidentified, and ambiguous. We hope that previous and current testimony could provide the administration a means to address glaring errors and omissions.

In our consideration and in addition to our original testimony we add:

1. Our bookstore provides a venue for local authors to present their literary works and discuss either the current titles or future endeavors. For example, we have scheduled 39 authors for the 2023 MDRF season. These authors have very few opportunities to engage the public and sell their books. Any mid-season cancellation of the MDRF would directly impact their sales and ability to promote their titles.
2. We also sponsor and host a “StoryTyme in the Grove” presentation at MDRF that engages children in an interactive format. This presentation is primarily held in coordination with the Anne Arundel County Public Library, Discoveries at the Mall. The library personnel provide this as a community outreach. Any disruption to their performances could impact how they have scheduled people for these events.

Specific to the proposed amended bill:

1. The office or county department or employee that will exercise the authority within the proposed bill is not identified. Is this one person or a committee? Who provides the decision?
2. In a situation that this unnamed entity renders a decision for period within a multi-day event, will the timeline remain 14 days prior to the proposed cancelled dates? (See 11-11-104(A)(2))
3. Within the “Issuance” section (11-11-104(B), there is a list of possible “violations” of the permit process. There does not seem to be clarity of severity. Are there specific items that are more egregious than others? Is the accumulation of several “minor violations” a factor of non-issuance? Is this a “point-based” evaluation that relies on the totality of the application or will there be differentiating levels of non-compliance (minor, significant, or unacceptable?)
4. There is no indication a decision of non-compliance can be appealed and at what level that appeal should be final. A good oversight measure might be that the County Council hears any appeal, to allow our elected officials to determine the effectiveness of proposals such as these.

Overall, the bill lacks clarity, it seems to rely on handshakes and agreements which are not explicit or captured for posterity. This could result in ambiguous outcomes as administrations or county employees change. Additionally, it seems to dismiss any previously agreed zoning permissions, granted by Anne Arundel County (as referred to by Mr. Smith of MDRF). I would ask, if this bill truly is necessary to address potential problems, then do it so there is no potential unintended consequences.

Thank you for considering our testimony,

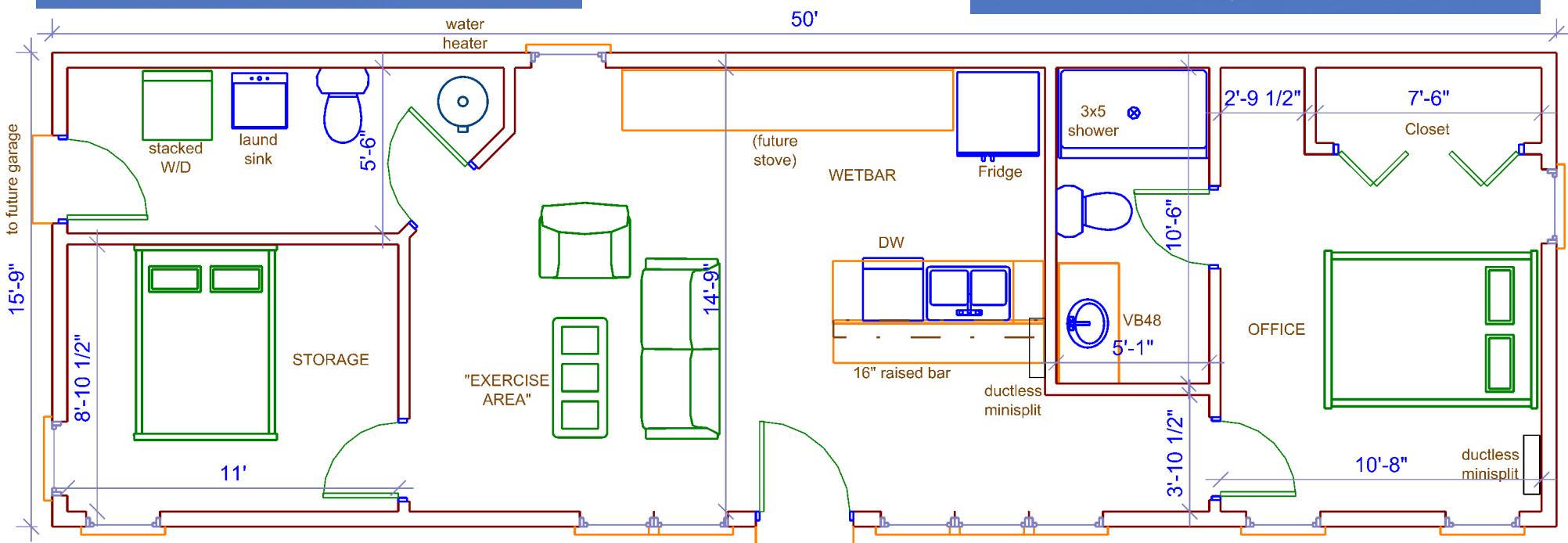
Thomas C. Bailey, PhD and Vicki R. Bailey



Shed Roof



Gabled Roof



ZEBRON OFFICE COTTAGE v.2 07.08.22

Concept: not for permitting/AA Co review

PERMITTING: shall reflect conformance to AA Co Accessory Residential Structure guidelines



