

Advocacy Alert!

2006 Legislative Session Ends. Preservation Interests Do Well. Barn Bill Passes. Work Needed to Prepare for 2007.

After ninety days of intense activity, the 2006 General Assembly came to a close on Monday, April 10th. The closing days were dominated by heated debate over BGE rate hikes and the proposed State takeover of underperforming Baltimore City Schools. In the midst of the controversies, and thanks to your hard work, legislative and budgetary preservation interests did well.

Budget Items Passed:

- \$30 million for commercial projects under the [Rehabilitation Tax Credit](#) program (the residential program remains a true tax credit and does not require a budget appropriation).
- \$3 million for the [Maryland Heritage Area Authority](#) to support the state's 13 Certified and Recognized Heritage Areas
- \$1.99 million for operational support for history museums through the [Museum Assistance Program](#)
- \$600,000 for [capital grant](#) funding for historic preservation projects
- \$458,000 for [non-capital grant](#) funding for historic preservation projects
- \$200,000 for [IMPART grants](#) to fund graduate level internships and assistantships for students in archaeology, museum studies, and historic preservation.
- \$53,500 for support of the [Maryland Humanities Council](#).

Legislative Agenda Items Passed:

- **Barn Bill** ([Agriculture - Preservation of Historic Structures: HB 699](#)) – establishing a Maryland Advisory Committee on Historic Agricultural Structure Preservation and a Maryland Barn Preservation Fund.
- **Heritage Area Bill** ([Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Financing Fund - Time Limitations: HB 175](#)) - will allow the [Maryland Heritage Areas Authority](#) to continue to use funds transferred to the program from Program Open Space to be used to support the operating expenses of the MHAA.

Tax Credit Legislation Fail:

- **Tax Credit Bill HB1534** ([Heritage Credit - Maximum Credit - Multiple Related Structures](#)): Providing an exception to the treatment of multiple related structures as a single rehabilitation for purposes of the per project limitation on the amount

of the heritage structure rehabilitation tax credit for projects in counties that have not received a percentage of the heritage tax credit as large as the percentage of the total number of National Register structures in the State.

- **Tax Credit Bill HB314** ([Maryland Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program](#)): limiting the tax credits awards allowed in a single jurisdiction; extending the termination date of the program to 2012.

Looking forward, we will need to work out of session to build support within the Maryland General Assembly to support the Heritage Tax Credit program which is set to expire next year. Preservation Maryland and the Maryland coordinating council will work to determine the strategy for next year's legislative session.

Thank You to All Who Have Helped

We would like to thank Governor Ehrlich, and key members of the General Assembly, including Delegate Maggie McIntosh. We were ably represented by Robin Shaivitz and the firm of Alexander & Cleaver, who guided us in our efforts. Thank you to all who helped to support this year's legislative and budget agendas through letters, e-mails, phone-calls and testimony. Your efforts were key to the successful conclusion of this year's Legislative Session. We look forward to working with you next year to promote a strong preservation agenda and to extend and strengthen the State Heritage Tax Credit program.

Thank you for your support!

Tyler
