

future operation and support of Historic St. Mary's City, as well as other options and opportunities to provide for the governance and support of Historic St. Mary's City; and

WHEREAS, The Historic St. Mary's City Commission has been successful in:

(a) acquiring and preserving 835 acres of the original Town Lands of St. Mary's City;

(b) constructing several outdoor museum exhibits, including an authentic 17th century sailing ship (The Dove), a public inn (Farthing's Ordinary), a tobacco plantation (Godiah Spray Plantation), and an Indian hamlet;

(c) developing on-site and off-site educational programs with costumed interpretive staff for elementary school students;

(d) identifying, through painstaking historical research, the major contributions the early Maryland settlers made in the development of American Civilization, such as religious toleration and representative government;

(e) archaeological investigations which have made discoveries of national and international significance, such as the first Roman Catholic Church in English America, the use of a unique and revolutionary urban design in the layout of the colony's first city, and most recently the discovery of three rare lead coffins containing members of Maryland's founding family, the Calverts; and

WHEREAS, The scientific and research elements of the program at Historic St. Mary's City have enjoyed widespread respect among its academic and research peers both nationally and internationally, for which the funding, organizational structure, and strategies for expanding the knowledge and appreciation of Historic St. Mary's City have not been adequate to date to provide the widespread public knowledge and appreciation the site so richly deserves; and

WHEREAS, The Commissioners of the Historic St. Mary's City Commission recognize that it is not economically feasible at the present time to develop Historic St. Mary's City into a major tourist attraction in the manner of Colonial Williamsburg or Old Sturbridge Village; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has determined that the most viable future for Historic St. Mary's City lies in a more intensive educational focus where the museum can serve as a center for education on a range of subjects, especially including historical archaeology and early colonial American history significant to Maryland as well as the nation; and

WHEREAS, Many Maryland and national "firsts" occurred at St. Mary's City, it being the place where:

(a) The separation of church and state was first practiced in the United States starting in 1634;

(b) Mathias De Sousa was the first man of African descent to vote in a legislature in 1645;