

**FISCAL YEAR 2010
OVER THE TARGET REQUEST**

TITLE/DESCRIPTION: D60A10.03 The State House Visitor Experience

FINANCIAL/PERSONNEL SUMMARY:

General Fund: Amount \$	2,141,281	Positions:	1	FT	___	PT	3	Contractuals
Special Fund: Amount \$	_____	Positions:	___	FT	___	PT	___	Contractuals
Federal Fund: Amount \$	_____	Positions:	___	FT	___	PT	___	Contractuals
Reimb Fund: Amount \$	_____	Positions:	___	FT	___	PT	___	Contractuals
Total Funds: Amount \$	2,141,281	Positions:	1	FT	___	PT	3	Contractuals

A. TYPE OF REQUEST:

New Program ___ Expand Existing Service ___ Restore Service ___ New Facility ___ Other X ___

B. REASON FOR REQUEST:

During the recent closing of the State House, it was noted that over 1,000 people per day enjoyed the “alternative” state house exhibit on the ground floor of the House Office Building. This confirms previous estimates by the Office of Tourism Development of (OTD) DBED that over 200,000 people visit the State House each year. That number should not be surprising because the State House is the most historically significant state building in Maryland. This request is for funds to begin the implementation of the Visitor Experience Master Plan adopted over a year ago. It also features an initiative to transfer the responsibility for the visitor’s center from OTD to the Archives and includes the development of a plan to restore the Old Senate Chamber in an appropriate historical context.

C. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

During Fiscal Year 2008 and in to 2009, the Archives will pursue private fund raising activities for the exhibits in the hopes that some of the Fiscal Year 2011 costs can be offset by contributions. The Archives will also explore partnerships with private sector tour guides to see if there are any opportunities for resource sharing.

D. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE REQUEST:

Historical exhibits are essential to interpreting the significance of the nationally important events that have taken place in the State House over four centuries. All of the previous exhibits that were installed in the early 1980s have been removed for this year’s closure and most cannot be put back. New, interactive exhibits that will engage a new generation of visitors and students are needed. As it now stands, when the State House reopens, there will be no exhibits on view at all. The proposed new exhibits will expand the interpretation of the State House beyond the 18th century to include four centuries of Maryland history, as well as the process of Maryland laws and government.

In addition to the historical exhibitions, there is also a need for a visitor’s center presence in the State House. The OTD has decided that staffing and operating a visitors’ center in the State House is no longer within its mission. Some 200,000 visitors come to the State House every year and many of them use the Visitors’ Centers’ free tours, as well as a source of historical and tourist information. With appropriate funding, the Archives proposes to assume this function as part of its interpretive role for the State House.

Finally, the Old Senate Chamber has been stripped of most all of the 20th Century plaster. The expert hired by DGS with consultation from the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) and the Archives will soon be completing their analysis of this exceptionally important space. Following this analysis should be a thorough scholarly exchange and discussion to determine the ultimate design specification for the recreation of the chamber. With these funds the Archives would coordinate this effort with DGS and MHT in much the same way the Historic Furnishings Plan was developed for the recreation of the Old House of Delegates Chamber.

E. FISCAL IMPACT:

See attached