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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Howard County Organizations Jointly Present 'Local HoCo' Shop Local Campaign

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Visit Howard County, Howard County Economic Development Authority, and Howard County Chamber, in partnership with Howard County Government, are collaborating on an exciting new campaign to encourage patronage of Howard County-based businesses.

'Shop Local' isn't just a catchphrase—it's a philosophy and a commitment to fostering economic resilience while preserving the character of our community. By choosing to patronize local businesses, we not only invest in the prosperity of our neighbors and friends but also contribute to the vitality and sustainability of our local economy.

Studies show “for every \$100 spent at a local business, \$68 remained in the city while only \$43 of each \$100 spent at a chain retailer.” What does that mean to Howard County? Our economy is approximately 26 billion dollars. If we shop local, produce local, and use local services, we'd keep over 6 billion dollars in our local economy. More money stays in Howard County when we spend at locally owned businesses. *Source: Maryland GDP by County*

When we shop, eat, drink, play, stay, and give local 50% more of our money stays in the community and helps support jobs and the economy, plus we:

- generate tax revenue that supports services like education, fire and safety, and other community needs;
- allow local businesses to GIVE locally ... they donate twice as much to community causes than national chains;
- preserve our community's unique character;
- build relationships with other consumers and business providers;
- allow businesses to buy and sell local products and services;
- keep our community vibrant and growing

When consumers see the 'Local HoCo' Howard County Original Business seal, they will know they are supporting a small and or local business.

Visit Howard County will host the website <https://www.visithowardcounty.com/shop-local-hoco/>, which is dedicated to educating residents and visitors on the benefits of supporting local businesses. The website will also link to a directory of locally owned and operated businesses in Howard County.

All local businesses are invited to participate in this important campaign to showcase local goods and services and encourage consumers to shop, dine, eat, drink, play, stay, and give local!

To participate, businesses can do the following:

1. Proudly display the enclosed **Local HoCo** cling in their businesses
2. Consider displaying the Local HoCo seal on their website ([download here](#))
3. Check your **free** directory listing at www.hceda.org/howard-county-business-directory/
4. If not already a member of Visit Howard County, consider joining for just **\$50 annually** to receive web and print listings, consumer-facing promotional opportunities, and more! Email or call: Membership@howardcountytourism.com / 240-586-2193
5. If not already a member of the Howard County Chamber, consider joining to receive directory listings, networking, business opportunities, and more! Email or call: kleppin@howardchamber.com / 410-730-4111

These simple steps are all that are needed. Visit Howard County will take care of the rest and showcase all the wonderful experiences that await when supporting Howard County's locally owned and operated businesses.

Residents and visitors alike can show their support and enthusiasm for local businesses by displaying an official 'Local HoCo' bumper magnet. Bumper magnets are free at the Howard

County Welcome Center while supplies last. Pick them up at 8267 Main Street, Ellicott City, 21043, open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm.

“Our small and local businesses are the cornerstone of Howard County’s economy, creating vital jobs and driving continued investment in our community,” said Howard County Executive Calvin Ball. “Through the Local HoCo campaign, I encourage all our residents, employees, and visitors to spend your dollars at our incredible and diverse array of local businesses. Together, we will continue to empower our entrepreneurs, support our workforce, and highlight the many small businesses that make Howard County a special place to live, work, play, grow, and thrive for all.”

“I hope County residents take advantage of this shop local campaign and invite their favorite people out for lunch and a shopping excursion to support our local businesses,” added Deb Jung, Council Chair and District 4 representative of the Howard County Council.

“We are beyond excited about the launch of Local Hoco,” said Amanda Hof, Executive Director for Visit Howard County. “Our locally owned and operated businesses are an important part of what makes Howard County a unique and a one-of-a-kind place to visit, live, work, play, and thrive.”

“Local HoCo aligns perfectly with our economic development goals for Howard County,” said Jennifer Jones, CEO for Howard County Economic Development Authority. “By encouraging residents to support local businesses, we’re fostering job growth, strengthening our tax base, and preserving the unique character of our community. This initiative is a practical way for every resident to contribute to Howard County’s economic vitality.”

“In Howard County, every purchase made at a locally owned business invests in our community,” said Kristi Simon, President & CEO for the Howard County Chamber. “By shopping local, we encourage entrepreneurship, strengthen our workforce, and create a sustainable future by keeping our tax revenue right here at home.”

“As Howard County residents, we chose to open our seafood restaurant, Hudson Coastal, in the neighborhood where we live and are raising our children,” said Tricia Hudson, Board President for Visit Howard County and Owner of Hudson Coastal Raw Bar & Grill. “One benefit of owning our business in this great county is that we are able to support local non-profits by providing food and our time to their causes. This also leads to a full-circle moment when those who work and volunteer for these organizations come in to support our business. We are keeping local

money in our county to support local causes. By supporting local businesses, you are providing us with the ability to give back”.

“This campaign is about ensuring we have a vibrant and prosperous community for ALL,” said Adam Joss, Owner of Vertical Connection Carpet One. “There are numerous examples of communities that have benefited when residents choose to support local businesses and organizations.”

Visit Howard County (501c6 not-for-profit) is recognized by Howard County Government and the Maryland Office of Tourism Development as the official Destination Marketing Organization for

Howard County, Maryland and funded by a legislated portion of the county hotel tax, allocated through Howard County Government. Visit Howard County’s mission is to be the official organization to market and develop the County as a premier leisure and business travel destination.

www.VisitHowardCounty.com

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