

Oral Testimony by Shekhar Murkute, PE – President of Pioneer Civil Engineering Services, Inc.

Thanks for the opportunity to testify in front of the MD Senate.

This is Shekhar Murkute, PE - President of Pioneer Civil Engineering Services, Inc (PCES). We are MDOT certified MBE/DBE/SBE/SBR. PCES offers Architectural and Engineering Services like Construction Management and Inspection, Pavement and Geotechnical Design, Pavement/Asset Management, Highway Design, Surveying, Partnering with the Asphalt/Concrete/Aggregate Industry for innovation.

I am here to testify in support of the Senate Bill 442. I worked for MDOT collectively for 17+ years as Division Chief, Design Team Leader, and on-site consultant along with working as Director for Design and CMI for small business firm with 140 employees.

Most of my work for last 17+ years with MDOT was concentrated on State Owned roadways (MD, US, and IS) in Montgomery and Prince George's County and was part of Design Build, CMAR, Progressive Design Build, and Purple Line P3 projects. All these big projects have benefitted not only the Prime companies, but also lot of MBE companies in MD. As MBEs have worked on these big projects, they have gained valuable experience and are looking forward to working on bigger and better projects for MDOT and MD Counties. The MBEs who already have well trained personnel or the MBEs who are willing to train their personnel will require more infrastructure projects like P3 to work on. There is no better way to utilize these MBEs than to make them part of the biggest and historic P3 projects that MD is initiating. Some of MBEs will use this experience and will go on to become smaller Prime companies and, in the process, fulfill one of the goals of MDOT's SBR/SBE program. The P3 project can provide MBEs with a platform to learn and aim to become smaller Prime companies in future.

Currently, the infrastructure spending from MDOT is on the lower side as compared to last few years due to challenges in securing funds (gas tax and FHWA) and P3 will help in bridging the gap in funding and maintain steady source of work and revenues for MBEs.

I would like to thank Opportunity MDOT, a program by MDOT, to help MBEs understand the intricacy of P3 projects.

In conclusion, this will be once in a lifetime opportunity for MBEs to be part of something big and historic and be part of helping the community.