



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 1026 – Economic Development Programs – Data Collection, Tracking, and Reporting
Requirements – Alteration
House Ways and Means Committee
February 25, 2020**

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1026 – Economic Development Programs – Data Collection, Tracking, and Reporting Requirements – Alteration. My name is Donna S. Edwards and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members I offer the following comments.

Accountability and transparency are the cornerstone of all tax credits. Without them, we are wasting taxpayers' money, because we cannot point to any empirical evidence that the stated goals of the credits are being met. Tax credits for Maryland businesses is an investment by us into their companies. Like an investor, we deserve to see what we are getting for our money, to determine if the investment was worth it, or not.

HB 1026 provides the much-needed reporting for four of our business tax credits: More Jobs for Marylanders, Purchase of Cybersecurity Technology or Service, Opportunity Zone Enhancement, and Small Business Relief. The annual reporting requirements applied to these credits includes the name of each business that receives them, the total amount received, the number jobs and average salary created by them, and a statement of whether the credit was reduced, revoked, or recaptured for any reason.

These common-sense measures to apply a level of accountability and transparency to the millions of dollars that Maryland taxpayers subsidize businesses is a good start to creating a robust reporting system for every dollar we invest. Every investor deserves to know how their money is being spent, and Maryland taxpayers should enjoy the same benefit.

We ask for a favorable report on HB 1026.