



Odette Ramos

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Testimony

**SB0085 – Corporations and Associations – Limited Worker Cooperative Associations – Authorization
(Maryland Limited Cooperative Association Act)**

March 26, 2024

FAVORABLE

Honorable Chair Wilson and Distinguished Members of the House Economic Matters Committee:

I am writing to urge your support for **SB0085 – Corporations and Associations – Limited Worker Cooperative Associations – Authorization (Maryland Limited Cooperative Association Act)**. Thank you to Senator Mary L. Washington for sponsoring this bill.

SB0085 would authorize the formation of limited worker cooperative associations including the establishment of rules and procedures, governance, conversion, and when needed, the dissolution of limited worker cooperative associations. This would provide the ability for another business type to be established that is currently not represented in statute.

The cooperative industry is one made up of farmers, consumers, and other organizations where most are community centric. Cooperatives have been known to provide some vital services to different communities, like housing. Maryland recognizes Limited Liability Companies, or LLC, and Limited Liability Partnerships, or LLP, which do not provide the same opportunities and structure that the Limited Worker Cooperative, or LWC, would, such as being worker-owned. LWC's also operate outside of investors which can result in a community investment instead.

In our district, we have several worker cooperatives including Red Emma's, ACE Hardware, and Common Grounds in Hampden. This bill would assist them in their businesses and will assist others working towards creating an LWC.

Please issue a favorable report for SB0085.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached on 410-396-4814 or via email at odette.amos@baltimorecity.gov.

Respectfully Submitted:

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