



Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce

10665 Stanhaven Place, Suite 300A

White Plains, MD 20695

(443) 646-5744

**TESTIMONY OF EDESEL BROWN JR.
HOUSE HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
SUPPORTING HOUSE BILL 835
(CALVERT COUNTY – PROCUREMENT – LOCAL PREFERENCE)**

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

1pm

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the Committee. My name is Edsel Brown Jr., I live in Lusby, Maryland, and I am here as Chairperson of the Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce, serving Calvert, Charles, Saint Mary's, and Southern Prince George's Counties.

Our organization fully supports the aims of House bill 835.

This bill will authorize the County Commissioners of Calvert County to enact an ordinance that establishes a local percentage preference for certain procurement contracts.

Several counties in Maryland have local preference procurement policies, including counties neighboring Calvert County.

The rationale in seeking the local preference authority is to enable Calvert like other counties the ability to stimulate growth by supporting local vendors which can help create and maintain jobs and contribute to overall economic development by circulating money within the community. It can also assist in the retention of wealth by keeping procurement dollars within the local economy.

In closing we note that similar bills have been sought for passage in the previous two-House sessions and we ask that Calvert, like other counties, be empowered with this tool to be added to its procurement policy toolbox.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak, and we encourage your support of House bill 835.