

**Baltimore Green Justice
Workers Cooperative**

www.greenjusticeworkers.org

Testimony in Support of SB0085 - Corporations and Associations - Limited Worker Cooperative Associations - Authorization (Maryland Limited Cooperative Association Act)

On behalf of Baltimore Green Justice Workers Cooperative (BGJWC), a new nonprofit start-up in Baltimore, please accept this written testimony in support of SB0085, Corporations and Associations - Limited Worker Cooperative Associations - Authorization (Maryland Limited Cooperative Association Act).

BGJWC believes in the value of co-ops, and we are working with other individuals, nonprofits and co-op owners in Baltimore City to provide a supportive ecosystem for new, emerging and established co-ops. It is for this reason that BGJWC asks your support in passing SB0085, a more inclusive worker coop statute for the State of Maryland.

As noted on a co-op friendly website, I believe that “worker cooperatives are owned and democratically controlled” by the people who work for them, “and are an important strategy for creating more resilient local economies. Compared to typical corporations, worker cooperatives are more efficient wealth-creators, tend to reinvest in the local economy, and typically provide salaries and benefits that exceed industry standards.”

Historically co-ops have been an important economic legacy in Black and Brown communities around the world where these populations are often marginalized and under-served due to race and class issues. Unfortunately, these marginalized and under-served communities are often predominately Black or Brown and lack viable alternative economic structures, like co-ops, that could provide wealth building mechanisms in low-wealth communities. This is also true for the State of Maryland.

Your vote to pass SB0085 will help ensure structure and build governance over a growing ecosystem of co-ops in Maryland that will benefit from having the opportunity to work in partnership with our elected officials to structure a governance format that is more supportive of the varying different types of co-op structures that could exist in our State.



Kimberly Armstrong
Founding Member



Lynn Pinder
Founding Member