



January 15, 2024

The Honorable, Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building
Room 131
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 26 - Small, Minority, and Women–Owned Businesses Account – Alterations

Dear Representative Atterbeary:

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for House Bill 26 Small, Minority, and Women–Owned Businesses Account (SMWOBA)– Alterations. House Bill 26 updates the statute governing the SMWOBA program, which provides capital in the form of loans to small, minority, and woman owned businesses throughout the State of Maryland. Specifically, the bill will allow for grants of up to \$10,000 to be issued in conjunction with a loan. This enhancement to the program should further help small business owners access capital to help start & grow businesses thus increasing the employee and tax base in Maryland.

As a fund manager for the SMWOBA program, the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation has issued over \$20 million in loans to small, minority, and woman owned businesses throughout the state. These types of businesses face unique challenges when trying to access capital to start and grow their businesses. One of the main challenges for these types of small businesses is having the required equity injection to start or grow a business. The proposal enabling grants up to \$10,000 will help to bring these small businesses onto a more equal playing field. For these reasons, I support and respectfully urge the House Ways and Means Committee to act favorably upon HB 26.

Sincerely,

Stephen Primosch

Vice President, Financial Services