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Vice Chair
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Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committees

Administrative, Executive, and
Legislative Review

Unemployment Insurance Oversight

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Thursday, March 20, 2025

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 4: West North Avenue Development Authority -
Alterations**

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 4, which seeks to enhance the administration and membership of the West North Avenue Development Authority. Established in 2021, the Authority was created to advance housing, economic development, transportation, and neighborhood revitalization along the 600–3200 blocks of West North Avenue.

On Wednesday, January 31, 2024, the Authority submitted the West North Avenue Comprehensive Plan, which outlines strategies to promote restorative justice and equitable community development. The plan focuses on enhancing housing, public spaces, mobility, and economic opportunities for one of Baltimore City's most disadvantaged areas.

Senate Bill 4 clarifies the powers and duties of the Authority while instituting necessary limitations. It also exempts the Authority from certain legal provisions, requires specific actions related to its financial operations, and provides tax exemptions under defined circumstances. Furthermore, the bill establishes the West North Avenue Development Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund to support these initiatives.

This legislation is a critical step toward fostering sustainable development and addressing historical inequities in our city. I urge you to support Senate Bill 4 to help advance the transformative vision for West North Avenue.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Antonio L. Hayes', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Senator Antonio L. Hayes
40th Legislative District – MD