



## House Bill 235

**Position: Favorable**

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Date: February 12, 2026

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (“Maryland Chamber”) is a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and opportunity for all Marylanders.

House Bill 235 is a practical and important step toward improving access to economic development resources for small businesses, nonprofits, and community-based organizations across Maryland. By eliminating an additional layer of approval, HB 235 would help streamline the process, reduce unnecessary delays, and ensure that state resources can reach eligible applicants more efficiently.

Many neighborhood businesses and microenterprises already face significant barriers when seeking financial assistance. Requiring local approval can create inconsistency, slow project timelines, and discourage otherwise qualified applicants. HB 235 preserves appropriate state oversight while allowing the Department of Housing and Community Development to administer the program more effectively and equitably. **For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 235.**