



committee for
MONTGOMERY

**House Bill 204 - Disadvantaged Business Enterprises and Veteran-Owned Small
Business Enterprises - Filing Fee Exemption and Study**

Economic Matters Committee

February 19, 2020

SUPPORT

Committee for Montgomery (CfM) is a coalition of leaders representing a broad cross-section of Montgomery County business, labor, education, civic, and community-based organizations. Our mission is to advocate in Annapolis on issues of importance to Montgomery County and the State. Through our membership, CfM represents more than 350,000 Montgomery County voters. CfM shapes its state legislative and budget priorities based on its goal of preserving and strengthening Montgomery County as a place to live, work, and learn.

One of our legislative priorities is strengthening the economy. Montgomery County must have a thriving economy to support investments made in education, public safety, and health and human services. A strong and educated workforce is a pivotal component of our economy and should be cultivated through substantive investments in apprenticeship and Career and Technology Education (CTE) programs. Furthermore, incentives and tax credits for our businesses are vital to keep Montgomery County competitive with surrounding jurisdictions throughout the Washington DC metro area.

With that in mind, CfM supports House Bill 204. This bill requires the State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) to waive the annual corporate filing fee for the first three years that a business entity is certified under the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program or a veteran-owned small business enterprise (VOSBE). Further, SDAT must review the filing fees and associated requirements of neighboring states and report recommendations to the General Assembly that would make Maryland more competitive with neighboring states. This includes whether to establish less frequent filing requirements, decrease fees, or establish a sliding fee scale.

Supporting our small businesses is incredibly important as they are the backbone of our county and state economy. By supporting DBE and/or VOSBE small businesses, Maryland is sending a message of support to this diverse and vitally important segment of our business community.

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For the aforementioned reasons, **Committee for Montgomery supports House Bill 204 and respectfully urges a favorable report.**