

House Bill 896 - Environment - Statewide Green Business Certification Program – Establishment

Statement of David Guier, Senior Director at Global Communities

Environment and Transportation Committee Hearing

February 26, 2020

SUPPORT

House Bill 896 charges the Maryland Department of the Environment with creating a statewide program that mirrors and conforms with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program (GBC).

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice-Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 896. My name is David Guier. I am a Senior Director at Global Communities, a non-profit organization based on Silver Spring. Global Communities implements development and humanitarian assistance programs overseas, funded primarily by the U.S. Agency for International Development, but also by other federal and non-federal agencies.

Global Communities is also a Green Business, certified in 2019 by the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection. Our path to Green Business Certification began in 2016, when a survey of staff world-wide identified climate change as a top concern.

This concern naturally led Global Communities to Montgomery County's Green Business Certification program. To qualify, we went through a rigorous process, which included third-party verification of our application and of our operations. Green Certification has benefited our company in several significant ways.

- Global Communities has jumped out in front of many other companies in our industry on matters of sustainability.
- We have made many green connections to like-minded organizations and individuals.
 - One connection I personally made through the certification process was to the **Maryland Climate Leadership Academy** and the **Association of Climate Change Officers**. Through this connection, I was privileged to be recognized by Gov. Hogan as a Climate Change Professional just last month in the Maryland State House.
- We have benefited from the framework the certification process provides for our company, or any company, to implement an ambitious program of organizational sustainability.
 - Our sustainability program at Global Communities includes, among many other initiatives, a Zero Waste Office, a Green Purchasing Policy, and a Roll Out of the Green Business program to our field offices world-wide.

This is why House Bill 896 is so important. By creating a statewide program that mirrors and conforms with the Montgomery County Green Business Certification Program, you can provide the opportunity for many organizations across many sectors to learn and to lead on sustainability. You can provide these organizations the opportunity to be part of the solution to the enormous challenges of climate change as our nation, our states, and our communities go forward.

For these reasons, Global Communities supports House Bill 896 and respectfully urges a favorable report.