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PARLIAMENTARIAN

Ways and Means Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 20, 2020

House Bill 540 State Income and Property Tax Credits – Purple Line Construction Zone

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present **House Bill 540 State Income and Property Tax Credits – Purple Line Construction Zone**, which would provide an income and property tax credit for businesses certified to have a loss of business income due to Purple Line construction in Montgomery and Prince George's county.

The Purple Line is a 16-mile light rail line currently under construction that will extend from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George's County. This project has widespread support and will provide a fast, direct, and more reliable east-west transit service, reduce carbon by getting cars off the road, and will create a major economic boost for our state and businesses in the long-run.

Unfortunately, during the ongoing construction of the Purple Line, small, immigrant and minority-owned businesses have been negatively impacted by road closures, traffic, service cuff-offs, and other construction-related factors, causing a dramatic decrease in sales and revenue over the past few years. HB 540 would help provide these businesses with the necessary financial relief to stay open through the construction, and ensure these small businesses will still be here to reap the benefits once the Purple Line is finished.

After speaking with small business owners along the Purple Line route, I am also offering an amendment that would change the bill from a tax credit to a grant, allowing for impacted small businesses to receive the funds sooner.

It's critical that Maryland continues to support small minority businesses that are impacted by state funded projects. HB 540 provides necessary financial relief that will not only help keep our businesses afloat, but preserve the culture and diversity these businesses bring to Montgomery and Prince George's counties. For these reasons, I urge a **favorable** report for **House Bill 540**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jheanelle Wilkins'.

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins