



# TESTIMONY SB294

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Carl Roberts, and I am the Chairman of the Bainbridge Development Corporation. I am joined by Steve Cassard, our Executive Director. We are here in support of SB 294 sponsored by Senators Gallion, Hershey and Peters.

By way of background, the Bainbridge Development Corporation (BDC) was created in 1999 by the Maryland General Assembly to develop and implement a dynamic, sustainable plan for the former Naval Training Center at Bainbridge, with the objective to transfer the 1,185-acre site into productive use by the public and/or private sector. To accomplish this goal, the BDC is managed by an Executive Director and governed by a 15-member Board of Directors. The BDC operates various internal committees to support the critical elements and activities of the Corporation, including, communications, environmental, real estate, and historical preservation. To address technical activities, the BDC utilizes various contractors, consultants, and subject-matter experts.

BDC has a developer agreement with MTPM, a team lead by Ken Michael, that has invested over \$23 million since 2005 to overcome the challenges to developing this site. BDC operations are funded almost entirely by an annual contribution from MTPM – therefore we do not rely on state funding.

One of the largest obstacles confronting us over the past 20 years has been addressing the adverse environmental conditions on site left over from the former Naval Base of 30,000 people – which was closed in 1976. Fortunately, BDC reached agreement with the Navy in 2019 to clean up the asbestos material found in the top layers of the surface to achieve MDE approval for Commercial/Industrial development. BDC, MDE and MTPM are currently working with the Navy to remediate the first phase with clearing and grading currently underway. We have also been making progress in getting new water and sewer infrastructure to the site to support future development.

The last challenge is addressing the high cost of on-site infrastructure and the need for private investment to fully develop the site. MTPM is working with development prospects that forecast upwards of 4 million square feet and \$320 million of investment to complete Phase 1 of the site- roughly 430 acres- over three years. Phase 2 could sustain another 3.5 million square feet of development.

BDC appreciates the support of the delegation to provide a much-needed incentive to proceed with site development and, more importantly, attract quality tenants that bring jobs and taxes to a long dormant area of Cecil County.

The redevelopment of Bainbridge not only benefits the Town of Port Deposit and Cecil County, but it is also of regional and statewide economic importance given the scale of the project. We welcome the support of the Committee and are happy to answer any questions.

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## Board of Directors

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