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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 17, 2021

Senate Bill 649 Procurement – Department of General Services – MBE Program Compliance Officer

Testimony of Senator Melony G. Griffith (Favorable)

Good afternoon, Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. I am requesting a favorable report Senate Bill 649, Procurement – Department of General Services – MBE Program Compliance Officer.

Senate Bill 649's main goal is to improve State transparency around waivers from Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements by obligating the Office of State Procurement to provide all the reasons for each waiver granted annually. The bill will also establish the role of an MBE compliance officer position within the Office of State Procurement. The compliance officer would oversee the enforcement of MBE goals and issue an annual report that compares each agency's year end MBE participation vs. its participation goals.

In order for the MBE program to fulfill its purpose of ensuring that socially and economically disadvantaged business owners are included in Maryland's procurement and contracting opportunities, there must be accountability at every step of the procurement and contracting process. Senate Bill 649 will ensure this accountability and help Maryland meet its goal of 29% of the total dollar value of procurement contracts.