



POSITION STATEMENT

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 252 – MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AUTHORITY - MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROCUREMENT CONTRACT FINANCING PROGRAM

Sponsor – Senator Ellis

March 2, 2021

DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

Position: Support

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports Senate Bill 252, which creates the Minority Business Enterprise Procurement Contract Financing Program and Fund within the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority. The Program's purpose is to provide working capital to qualified minority business enterprises with a net worth under \$2 million in order to facilitate their ability to compete for state procurement contracts.

The GBC has been actively involved in supporting businesses as they weather the ill effects of the pandemic, restrictions limiting business operations, and the resulting negative economic impact on the business. To address the challenges and to help businesses recover, the Greater Baltimore Committee created the GBC COVID-19 Business Recovery Advisory Council. The advisory council, comprised of business executive of Baltimore regional businesses, was formed to provide assistance, create programs, and make policy recommendations to benefit small and minority-owned businesses.

One of the advisory council's major recommendations identified the importance of promoting and supporting efforts to increase access to capital for small and minority-owned businesses, including both traditional and non-traditional capital sources. Senate Bill 252 would provide small and minority business owners with access to capital during a very difficult business cycle.

Senate Bill 252 is also consistent with the GBC's *2021 Legislative Priorities*, which calls for policy, funding, and regulatory solutions to accelerate economic recovery with an emphasis on support to small and minority-owned businesses. The creation of the Minority Business Enterprise Procurement Contract Financing Program and Fund to benefit Maryland's small minority-owned businesses will provide much needed assistance to businesses to recover from the negative economic impact brought by the coronavirus pandemic and keep countless Maryland businesses viable.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 252.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 66-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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