

February 17, 2021

Thanks for the opportunity to testify in support of the House Bill 454 – Health and Government Operations Committee, Chairwoman Pendergrass.

This is Shekhar Murkute, the president/Owner of Pioneer Civil Engineering Services, Inc. We are MDOT certified MBE/DBE/SBE/SBR. The services offered are mainly Architectural and Engineering Services like Construction Management and Inspection, Pavement Design, Pavement/Asset Management, Highway Design, Surveying, Partnering with the Asphalt/Concrete/Aggregate Industry.

I am here to testify in support of the House Bill 454. I worked for MDOT collectively for 18+ years as Division Chief, Design Team Leader, and Division Chief along with working as Director for Design and CMI for a 140 employees small business firm.

Most of my work for last 18+ years with MDOT was concentrated on State Owned roadways in Montgomery and Prince George's County and was part of Design Build, CMAR, Progressive Design Build, and Purple Line P3 projects. All these projects have benefitted not only the Prime companies, but also lot of MBE/DBE companies in MD. As MBE's have worked on these projects, they have gained valuable experience and are looking forward to bigger and better projects from MDOT and MD Counties. Also, there are lot of new MBE's who are coming forward who are eager to learn and compete. As we all know, competition brings not only good quality but also innovation. All these MBEs who have well trained personnel or are willing to train these personnel will require more infrastructure projects to work on. There is no better way to utilize these MBEs than to make them part of the bigger projects that MD is initiating. Some of them will use this experience and will go on to Prime some of the Small Business contracts that MDOT will have in future.

To continue with the value-added service, it is important that the MBE/DBE and small businesses get paid in due time to maintain the cash flow. This is particularly of more significance to small businesses who may not have a large line of credit and depend on timely payment for invoices. This bill will offer that opportunity to streamline and expedite the invoice payments to small businesses.

Thanks for the opportunity to testify.

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