



Lead Center
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March 30, 2022

Chairman C.T. Wilson
Vice Chair Brian M. Crosby
Economic Matters Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
Room 231
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: FAVORABLE - SB782 / HB1424

Dear Chairman Wilson and Vice Chair Crosby:

The Maryland Small Business Development Center provides consulting and training services to Maryland's entrepreneurs statewide. Since March 2020, when our state shut down, and through today's still ongoing pandemic, much of Maryland's small business sector has been buffeted by Depression-like economic hardships. Nonetheless, in the midst of so much despair, our staff --- working in every corner of the state --- brought hope since March 2020 to more than 14 thousand clients; helped them raise more than \$240 million of new funding; and supported the growth or retention in our state of more than 66 thousand jobs. We even helped launch nearly 600 new Maryland companies. We are proud of the leadership we provided during these horrifically challenging past two years.

So we have seen firsthand the devastation to our state's small business sector brought about by COVID-19. And we therefore also have seen how much that sector could benefit from more strategic, more coordinated economic development planning and action to help it emerge stronger than ever post-COVID.

SB782 / HB1424 would provide that much needed more strategic, more coordinated economic development planning and action. It would bring together key stakeholders to create a Workgroup on the Post-Covid-19 Crisis Economic Transition. It would focus on many of the key concerns had by many of our state's small business owners. And it would move quickly, with a first interim report to be issued before the end of this calendar year.

For these reasons, the Maryland Small Business Development Center views these bills favorably, and seeks your Committee's enactment of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Paul Bardack

Paul Bardack JD
Executive Director