



Senate Bill 9 -- Procurement - Minority Business Enterprises - Study
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 29, 2022
Support

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports Senate Bill 9 -- *Procurement – Minority Business Enterprises – Study*.

Senate Bill 9 requires that a study is conducted to: (1) review allowing other State and federal certifications to be accepted as satisfying a requirement for certification as a minority business enterprise; and (2) make recommendations to streamline and improve the process for certification of a minority business enterprise that do not disadvantage Maryland businesses. The study would be due on or before December 1, 2022.

The State's MBE program is certified by the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Minority Business Enterprise. The federal DBE program is certified by the U.S. Department of Transportation and has similar aims as Maryland's MBE program, which is to increase participation of minority and women owned businesses in government projects.

Montgomery County and Metro Maryland are home to a vibrant and innovative community of federal government contracting companies. These small businesses are required to go through a rigorous and thorough certification processes to contract with federal government agencies. When these businesses apply for MBE certification, the process can seem redundant and time consuming if a company has already earned certification through similar federal government programs.

MCCC has long sought to grow the success of small and disadvantaged federal government contractors. The most prominent effort is the Montgomery County Chamber Community Foundation's Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP), a free nationally recognized federal procurement training program for Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses and Veteran-Owned Small Businesses. Even as the VIP program continues to achieve strong and measurable success, one hurdle often encountered by program graduates is the time and effort it takes to certify as a minority business contractor.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports Senate Bill 9 and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of our nearly 500 members, advocates for growth in business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and a proud Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

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