



Testimony HB 1094
Ways & Means Committee
March 2, 2022
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairperson Atterbeary and Members of the Ways & Means Committee:

The Community Development Network of Maryland (CDN) is the voice for Maryland's community development sector and serves nearly 200 member organizations. CDN—focuses on small affordable housing developers, housing counseling agencies and community-based non-profits across the state of Maryland. The mission of CDN is to promote, strengthen and advocate for the community development sector throughout Maryland's urban, suburban and rural communities. CDN envisions a state in which all communities are thriving and where people of all incomes have abundant opportunities for themselves and their families.

HB 1094 – Establishes the Maryland Technology Infrastructure Pilot Program in the Maryland Technology Development Corporation to establish a program in Western Maryland to support the innovation economy by incentivizing the development of advanced industry infrastructure and resources that build on the existing strengths of the region's economy; establishing the Maryland Technology Infrastructure Authority; and establishing the Maryland Technology Infrastructure Fund as a special, non-lapsing fund.

Western Maryland's economy currently sits at a crossroads. The region has seen decreasing population and economic dynamism. However, private employment in the region is still increasing and the region has concentrations in a number of key industries that can serve as a strong foundation to grow the region's economy in the future.

The Infrastructure Pilot program is part of the recommendations of the Western Maryland Economic Development Task Force which studied the economic conditions of Western Maryland and made recommendations for the improvement of the economies of Allegany County, Garrett County, and Washington County.

Create the Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Fund (WMEFIF). The five-year pilot program designed to increase investment and economic activity in the region go towards critical infrastructure and business development projects with matching funds from local entities. The WMEFIF would be overseen by a board comprised of representatives from the region and the Maryland Department of Commerce. This would be an excellent complement to the tools that TEDCO currently has.

We urge your favorable report for HB 1094.

Submitted by Claudia Wilson Randall, Executive Director