

Legislative Position: Support
House Bill 838
Economic Development – Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Board and Fund - Establishment
House Ways and Means Committee

February 11, 2022

Dear Madam Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, with 575 members representing over 40,000 employees, I am writing you in support of **House Bill 838, Economic Development – Western Maryland Economic Future Investment Board and Fund – Establishment**. Now is an especially critical time to invest in a program that will strengthen the current and future economic landscape of Western Maryland.

HB 838 was created by a diverse work group, meeting over the course of more than a year, and it included public access, comment, and recommendations. The legislation, itself, allows for strong collaboration and financial investment among the key stakeholders in Western Maryland: the private sector, local governments and municipalities, and the State of Maryland. Each representative brings an important perspective and level of creativity and experience on how to build and sustain economic growth in their respective County. The State of Maryland, via the Department of Commerce, will provide oversight and be the “managing partner” of this initiative.

To say that COVID-19 has had a tremendous and detrimental impact on Western Maryland’s economy would be an understatement. The program created, as laid out in HB 838, would be an outstanding part of the work needed for our local economies to overcome the impact of the pandemic, and then allow us to capitalize on future opportunities created by working in a public/private relationship. Everyone invests together and everyone wins together.

On behalf of the business and non-profit members of the Washington County Chamber of Commerce, we respectfully request a **FAVORABLE REPORT** on HB 838.

Sincerely,



Paul Frey, IOM
President and CEO