



Office of the President

**Morgan State University Testimony
Dr. David Wilson, President**

Senate Bill 0333 (Senators Hayes and Guzzone)
Economic Development – Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) Zone
Program – Alterations and Financing
Committee: Budget and Taxation Committee
February 8, 2023

Favorable

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee. We, at Morgan, thank you for the opportunity to share our position on Senate Bill 333. The summary of the Bill states the following: *Altering the period of time that an area may be designated as a Regional Institution Strategic Enterprise (RISE) zone; repealing the prohibition on the Secretary of Commerce from approving more than a certain number of RISE zones in a certain area; extending the termination date of the RISE Program; and authorizing a political subdivision to pledge certain revenues to secure the payment of obligations to the Maryland Economic Development Corporation for infrastructure improvements located in a RISE zone.*

Morgan State University is the premier public urban research university in Maryland, known for its excellence in teaching, intensive research, effective public service, and community engagement. Morgan prepares diverse and competitive graduates for success in a global interdependent society.

Morgan State University is in support of this bill, extending the sunset date and expanding the boundaries.

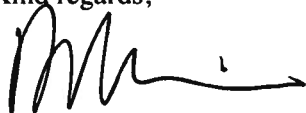
Morgan is witnessing and experiencing the transformation of the Northwood Shopping Center from a neglected area in the middle of residential communities and adjacent to Morgan's campus. The Center is now becoming a series of thriving businesses that also includes Morgan's recently opened Public Safety Building and the soon to open Morgan's Barnes and Noble Book Store. Approximately seven business have opened (Lidl's, Fulton Bank Chipotle, Harbor Bank, DTLR, Beauty Plus and McDonald's) with nine more to open between February and June of 2023 (Zips, Jersey Mikes, Tropical Smoothie, Nail Trix, Barnes & Noble, Georgia Peach, Pizza Hut, Quickway, and IHOP). Four businesses (Georgia Peach, Beauty Plus, Zips and Harbor Bank are MBE firms).

These businesses provide options for the communities and Morgan so leaving the area for basic needs and services is optional. Morgan would like to see the continued development of the rebranded Northwood Commons Center as stores and services continue to open with the assistance through the Rise Zone.

Morgan is also interested in seeing the zones expanded to assist with new development along Morgan's Portage Avenue property and the Lake Clifton High School property (acquisition completion is anticipated within the next one to two months).

In closing, Morgan supports the extension of the sunset date and expanded boundaries for the Rise Zone.

Kind regards,



Dr. David K. Wilson, President

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