



February 2, 2023

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair
Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Wing, Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland Inc. has voted to offer favorable support for Senate Bill 334 - State Procurement - Minority Business Enterprise Program - Extension and Reports. **This bill is a 2023 legislative priority of the Black Caucus.**

This bill alters the termination date for certain provisions of laws governing the Minority Business Enterprise Program and its application to offshore wind projects and video lottery terminals to July 1, 2024, as well as alters the date by which certain reports must be submitted. Additionally, if passed, the bill will initiate a study on the Minority Business Enterprise Program to evaluate and ensure compliance with the precedent set by the Supreme Court in *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*

To foster an environment where Maryland's MBEs can thrive, it is crucially important to have a program that functions and operates under the most recent provisions, precedents, and guidelines set by the law. In a state where the number of minority businesses increases annually, it is necessary for the Legislature to revisit the laws that impact our Minority Business Enterprise Program to ensure that it remains in compliance and operates properly. We believe this bill will beneficially impact the Minority Business Enterprise Program and, in turn, the minority-owned and operated businesses that it supports. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports Senate Bill 334 and would appreciate your favorable support of this legislation.

Jheanelle Wilkins

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins

Chair, Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland