



February 28, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone, Chair
The Honorable James Rosapepe, Vice Chair
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: S.B. 561 - Goodwill Industries of Chesapeake Excel Center in Baltimore City - Alterations

Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

My name is Jonathan Balog, Chief Communications Officer for Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake. Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake is a strong supporter of this bill.

Goodwill Industries has developed The Excel Center to offer services and opportunities that prepare its students for careers in middle skill industry sectors that pay a family sustaining wage.

The Excel Center serves a diverse population with students of all races, genders and ages connected to one another through their need and desire to continue their education and earn their high school diploma and secure a career that pays a family sustaining wage. Through a blend of traditional high school course requirements students earn credentials that increase access to higher education, employment with higher wages and increased career prospects.

The program offers individuals workplace skills training that includes effective communication, problem-solving, resume building, and interviewing to assist them with obtaining and retaining employment. The Excel Center also addresses critical non-academic barriers to employment opportunity, such as transportation, childcare, reliable housing, mental and physical health.

Excel Center have experienced 10 years of success in states such as Indiana, Texas, Tennessee, Missouri, and DC and we now want to bring the same results here to Maryland.

Senate Bill 561 will allow Goodwill Industries of Chesapeake to continue our good work in getting the Baltimore City Excel Center up and running to provide access to quality remedial education,



apprenticeships and employer needed skills and jobs to individuals who have faced educational challenges. The Baltimore Excel Center is scheduled to open in September 2023. Your support will ensure our continued success. We request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan A. Balog". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Balog

Chief Communications Officer