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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Hayes in Support of Senate Bill 334: State Procurement - Minority Business Enterprise Program - Extension and Reports

February 8, 2023

Chairman Guzzone and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

Senate Bill 334 seeks to alter termination dates for certain provisions of the laws that govern the Minority Business Enterprise Program and dates when certain reports and studies need to be submitted. It would initiate a study on the Minority Business Enterprise Program to evaluate compliance with the *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.* Supreme Court decision. This decision held that a program which gave preference to minority business enterprises was unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause. It would also evaluate race-neutral programs and other methods to help address the needs of minority businesses.

The deadline for the submission of the study's findings would be December 31, 2023 to ensure that the General Assembly can review them before the next legislative session. This bill is essential for minority owned businesses to thrive in the future.

As such, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 334.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Antonio L. Hayes".

Senator Antonio L. Hayes
40th Legislative District – MD