



February 27, 2023

Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, Chairwoman
Health and Government Operations Committee
House Office Building, Rm. 241
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Pena-Melnyk and Members of the Committee:

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers **favorable** support for House Bill 646 State Procurement - Minority Business Enterprises and Small Business Enterprises - Procurement Forecast, Employee Performance, and Outreach (Small Business Protection Act of Maryland). **This bill is on the 2023 legislative priority agenda of the Black Caucus.**

This legislation aims to support minority and small business enterprises by requiring units to publish annual procurement forecasts, as well as implement considerations for merit increase eligibility. House Bill 646 will also establish performance-based promotions and consequences for procurement officers and employees that do not meet participation goals. This bill also seeks to establish requirements for the Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs to identify contracting opportunities for small businesses and develop a program to do so.

Implementing the changes put forth by this legislation is critical to supporting the growth and success of Maryland's small and minority business. This bill is a step we can take to further push this State in the right direction of meeting set goals and ensuring MBEs have an equal opportunity at securing procurement. For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland supports House Bill 646.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland