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Ways and Means Committee

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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Favorable Testimony

HB429: Procurement Improvement Council - Membership

Good Afternoon Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison and esteemed Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee. I write this letter to urge a favorable report on HB429. This is a simple Bill that alters the membership of the Procurement Improvement Council (PIC) to include the Comptroller of the State. As the only Delegate that sits on the PIC, I have seen where the addition of the Comptroller to our meetings would provide express benefits.

The PIC was created in 2013 and is responsible for overseeing and improving the procurement processes of Maryland. Prior to the creation of the PIC, Maryland's procurement process was criticized for being slow, cumbersome, and lacking transparency. While criticisms remain, it is known that the PIC has made great strides in generating quality recommendations and policies that push our State in the right direction. Since its inception, the Council has undergone certain alterations to ensure procurement in our State remains robust, accountable and continues pushing State procurement to be the best it can be.

As the State's Chief Financial Officer, the Comptroller of Maryland plays a critical role in ensuring that an array of State financial processes are transparent, efficient, and cost-effective. Including the Comptroller in the Procurement Improvement Council would bring similar benefits to the PIC process. The Comptroller's Office has a wealth of financial expertise and experience dealing with specifics of our State's finances which would be invaluable in the conversation covering how to improve the procurement process. The Comptroller could provide meaningful and necessary input on issues such as budgeting, financial reporting, and risk management, which has been noted as needed during meetings I have partaken in with the Council.

The Procurement Improvement Council is made up of representatives from various State agencies and including the Comptroller would ensure that all stakeholders are working together towards a common goal. The Comptroller could help to coordinate efforts between different agencies, which would improve communication and collaboration. Rather than having to end a meeting to receive answers from the Comptroller's Office, we could move forward more effectively having our answers addressed immediately by their participation in the meeting itself.

I believe this is an easy addition that would improve communication and efficiency in the PIC and for the reasons I have listed I would respectfully urge a favorable report on HB429.

Thank you,

Delegate Nick Charles

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Charles".