



Hon. C. T. Wilson, Chairman
Economic Matters Committee
Room 231, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Hon. Brian M. Crosby, Vice Chair
Economic Matters Committee
Room 231, House Office Building
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Organization: The American Council of Engineering Companies/MD (ACEC/MD)
Bill: HB1526 - Maryland Protecting Opportunities and Regional Trade (PORT) Act
Position: Support

Chairperson Wilson and Vice-Chair Crosby,

The American Council of Engineering Companies/MD (ACEC/MD) is the representative organization for approximately 90 consulting engineering firms of various sizes across the state. These firms play a crucial role in serving both the public and private sectors by actively participating in the design and development of essential infrastructure such as public water and wastewater systems, bridges, highways, building structures, and environmental projects.

Our organization's member firms collectively employ approximately 7,000 individuals statewide, and approximately forty percent of ACEC/MD's membership is comprised of certified small, minority-owned, or women-owned businesses, reflecting our commitment to diversity and inclusion within the engineering industry. We strongly **Support** this bill.

HB 1526 aims at providing essential relief to individuals and entities impacted by the closure of the Port of Baltimore, aligns with our mission to advocate for policies that promote economic growth, infrastructure development, and the well-being of workers in our state.

The Port of Baltimore serves as a vital economic artery, facilitating trade and commerce that sustains countless businesses and jobs throughout Maryland. However, closures and disruptions to port operations can have far-reaching consequences, particularly for workers who rely on the port for their livelihoods. The Maryland Protecting Opportunities and Regional Trade (PORT) Act recognizes the importance of supporting these individuals during times of hardship and uncertainty.

By establishing temporary relief programs through the Maryland Department of Labor and the Department of Commerce, this legislation will provide much-needed assistance to workers and entities adversely affected by the closure of the Port of Baltimore. These programs will help bridge the gap for displaced workers, offering financial support, retraining opportunities, and other resources to help them navigate this challenging period and transition to new employment opportunities.

Furthermore, the authorization for the Governor to transfer funds from the Revenue Stabilization Account underscores the state's commitment to swiftly and effectively addressing the needs of those impacted by the port closure. This proactive approach demonstrates Maryland's dedication to supporting its workforce and ensuring the resilience of our economy in the face of unexpected challenges.



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES/MARYLAND

For any comments, inquiries, or further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at cfaison@acecmd.org.

Respectfully,

Chad Faison
Executive Director, ACEC/MD