

PREPARED TESTIMONY OF PAUL MONTEIRO

SECRETARY, MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF SERVICE & CIVIC INNOVATION

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB762. I am here in my role as Secretary of the Department of Service and Civic Innovation. This new state agency is charged with creating two new streams of service, Service Year Option and Maryland Corps as well as expanding a legacy service program, AmeriCorps. The Department also plays a leading role in promoting volunteerism across the state as well as signature Days of Service such as MLK Jr. Day.

SB762 promotes community service and civic engagement. By offering incentives for young people to be engaged earlier and involved in their community, we can see benefits to both. We also know service is a nonpartisan strategy that helps to bring people together across lines of difference. By promoting these values for young people, they will be able to develop and incorporate them into their personal and professional lives as they become future community leaders.

Additionally, this legislation enlists and rewards schools for promoting service and encouraging academic achievement. By doing so, we can expect improved educational outcomes as schools are further encouraged to celebrate academic excellence and civic engagement.

The objectives of this legislation are closely tied with the objectives of the Department of Service and Civic Innovation. We support HB762 to augment the additional emphasis on service in the State of Maryland and encourage young Marylanders to contribute positively to their communities.