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January 29, 2024

House Economic Matters Committee
90 State Circle, Room 231
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Penalties Bill HB465 / SB436

Dear Chairs Wilsons and Beidle, and Honorable Members of the House Economic Matters Committee and Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Jonathan Bolden. I am a union Steamfitter, have my own company, RSC Electrical & Mechanical Contractors, Inc., and I am a proud union certified MBE minority contractor. My company is over 30 years old. We operate with a full Union Shop of twelve (12) Journeymen, three (3) apprentices, five (5) Electricians, and three (3) Master Mechanics. We pay our workers good wages, sometimes struggling to do so, so that they can have good, middle-class careers. But it's never easy.

As a small MBE, competing for qualified workers has always been difficult when other contractors pay workers off the books, misclassify workers, employ labor traffickers, and under-report wages on their payrolls. These practices create a completely rigged competitive disadvantage and are an existential threat to businesses like mine. In fact, these problems seem to be getting worse each year.

I support HB465 / SB436, which begins to get to the heart of these problems by elevating penalties, as many other states have done. Without this legislation, small MBEs like RSC Electrical & Mechanical Contractors, Inc. can not compete legally in Maryland against low-bid contractors, and from out of state contractors, engaging in all matter of illegal practices.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jonathan Bolden', written in a cursive style.

Johnathan Bolden
President