

Ahead of the Game Testimony 2024



Good Afternoon,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today, my name is David Smith. I represent one half of a Digital Barber School/Multimedia Incubator, Ahead of the Game. As a master barber that's served over three decades within the beauty/barbering industry partnered with my brother a media professional with two decades experience in Baltimore's local broadcast market we would respectfully request your support for Senate Bill 765. Why may you ask? Well, my brother and I have created a digital barbering school/multimedia incubator that will produce more businesses in the form of mobile barbershops synced with marketing production teams that will assist in the growth & proliferation of these businesses within underserved communities. This process functions as follows:

- BARBER STUDENTS & MEDIA INTERNS COLLAB TO PRODUCE MARKETING CONTENT
- MEDIA INTERN WILL REGULARLY PRODUCE SEGMENTS THAT WILL BE INCLUDED IN AN ONGOING WEBSERIES THAT HIGHLIGHTS BARBERING & VARIOUS LIFESTYLES
- MEDIA INTERNS WILL CREATE CONTENT FOR VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS THAT HIGHLIGHTS BARBERING & VARIOUS LIFESTYLES
- MEDIA INTERNS WILL USE ONGOING WEBSERIES TO ESTABLISH & GROW CUSTOMERS FOR BARBERING STUDENTS
- BARBER STUDENT TUTORIALS & SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CREATION WILL PROVIDE MEDIA INTERNS WITH ONGOING PROJECTS THAT WILL BETTER THEIR PRODUCTION SKILLS
- AOTG INCUBATOR WILL CREATE MORE LICENSED BARBERS WITH THE INTENT TO OPEN & OPERATE THEIR OWN BARBERSHOP FRANCHISE EQUIPPED WITH ITS OWN MARKETING/PRODUCTION TEAM
- AOTG INCUBATOR WILL CREATE SKILLED MEDIA PROFESSIONALS EVENTUALLY FORMING PRODUCTION TEAMS THAT WILL PRODUCE MARKETING & MEDIA CONTENT FOR THE CONSUMPTION OF A WIDE VIEWING AUDIENCE (DOCUMENTARIES, TRAINING VIDEOS, WEBSERIES, SHORT FILMS, COMMERCIALS, MUSIC VIDEOS, FEATURE FILMS, ETC...)

Furthermore, this legislation is necessary to support Maryland's economic development for businesses in diverse communities. This historic legislation will be utilized to make Maryland business creation more equitable, competitive, and up to date with modern enterprise standards and protocols.

Therefore, we, my brother & I, as well as others in attendance here today are in support of the Diversity Incubators bill SB765. This historic legislation and the immense need for economic development in underserved communities are addressed in this bill. Establishing the Business Diversity Program is to provide grants to specific social enterprises, nonprofits, and charitable organizations to establish diverse business incubators in the State of Maryland. These Diversity Incubators will create new businesses and investments in the communities in the State of Maryland it is for these reasons we ask that you Vote Yes for Senate Bill 765!