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**Chair Vanessa Atterbeary**

**Vice Chair Jheanelle Wilkins**

**Members of the House Ways and Means Committee**

**RE: SB473 – The Pava LaPere Legacy of Innovation Act**

Good afternoon.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to meet with you today.

We can think of no other way to show our strong support for Senate Bill 473, The Pava LaPere Legacy of Innovation Act, than by using her own words.

With your permission, we would like to read to you now the words she wrote in one of her many journals.

Pava was goal driven. She believed greatly in Baltimore, and in helping others create new and exciting, and equitable business ventures through entrepreneurship.

“What I Love about Baltimore,” by Pava Marie LaPere

“I love Baltimore because I love its entrepreneurs. I love the fact that our entrepreneurs have learned how to thrive despite often difficult circumstances.

I Love that people have built tech companies here, despite the lack of

capitol . . . and that the ‘Squeegee Boys’ have created economic opportunity for themselves when none was provided to them. I love that artists make music and paint murals in neighborhoods that most people choose to ignore. I love that the non-profits and community groups have dedicated themselves to solving problems that so many people declared as un-solvable.

I love the informal street markets and much as I love the small business storefronts that line our streets.

I love Baltimore because, despite all of our challenges, our entrepreneurs have risen to meet them, and will continue to do so as long as our great city stands.”

*Pava Marie LaPere*

We leave it up to you, The House of Delegates, The Maryland Senate, Governor Moore, TEDCO and the extended group of Maryland Entrepreneurs to do what needs to be done, as ALL entrepreneurs do, to finish the hard work that Pava so wanted to see happen.

Pava mentioned in a TedTalk that she gave during her senior year at Johns Hopkins University, that “the only qualification that you need to make changes is the fact that YOU are willing to do it”.

She will be watching us closely. Let’s do this, together.

Sincerely,

Caroline and Frank LaPere