Testimony in FAVOR of Senate Bill 426 on behalf of Authorium

Senate Bill 426 is a crucial piece of legislation to modernize and streamline Maryland's procurement system, and its passage is essential to improve government efficiency and service delivery. The bill directly addresses the need to streamline antiquated processes, employ innovative approaches, and leverage technology to enhance the procurement process.

Authorium is a public benefit corporation that works with states across the nation to improve process efficiency and modernize antiquated systems. We exclusively support the public sector, because that is our area of expertise – 60% of our employees served in government themselves. Below, we provide key reasons why SB 426 is necessary, and share evidence derived from our work with peer agencies in other states.

Don't Repave a Cow's Path
During a recent podcast interview, Amy Tong, Secretary of the California Government Operations Agency, shared insights on the need to address underlying processes as part of review of technology improvements. As Sec. Tong shared, when you're looking at ways to fix what's broken, don't repave a cow's path - make sure you have the correct processes and structures in place to succeed in the long term.

SB 426 echoes this principle to:

- Reduce administrative burdens and establish a 120-day procurement lead time for routine procurements.
- Standardize project specification templates and documentation protocols to minimize delays.
- Create more efficient processes for emergency procurements while maintaining oversight.
- Develop a more efficient process for handling contract modifications.
- Establish a centralized contract management process and platform.

We agree that these steps will support Maryland's goal of achieving measurable results, and Authorium's experience supporting other states and cloud-based platform for government support this goal. Authorium builds technology exclusively for the public sector, and helped agencies find and realize the benefits of automation and efficiency through a combination of process improvement, facilitating organizational change management, and with a platform focused on ease of use and flexibility - or in short: people, process, and technology coming

together to solve a challenge. The end result of bringing these together is not only greater efficiency, but richer data and insights that helps leaders make smarter decisions, deliver services more effectively, and develop robust data insights and interoperability via webhooks and APIs that the status quo can't support.

Deliver Critical Services: Every moment matters
As legislators review this bill, CalRecycle – a California state agency tasked with massive clean-up efforts as a result of the wildfires last month – is actively engaging with skilled contractors to remove debris and toxic waste. This critical step must happen before families can begin to rebuild their homes. Every moment counts and all eyes are on the State's response. The State must ensure that contracts are executed efficiently to qualified businesses, that small and disadvantaged businesses get a fair chance at the work, and that State and FEMA dollars are tracked and reported.

When disaster happens – as we know all too well in Maryland from the tragic collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge – states must be equipped for rapid response. Procurement teams in California called upon us because they know that an outdated procurement system should never be a barrier to critical environmental clean-up, a roof over a family's heads, or a local economy's recovery.

In another example of solving the problems SB 426 seeks to address, Authorium is partnering with Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) to support their critical mission of delivering services to our veterans. We are working with WDVA staff to address both inefficient processes and antiquated technology that has been a barrier to their mission. The process and technology must be in service of the people delivering critical mental health, housing, and other targeted in-person services to a veteran population distributed across a large and mountainous state.

At the federal level, the U.S. Airforce Research Lab (AFRL) tapped into our public-sector expertise to tackle its lengthy and complex statement of work (SOW) development time. Thr SOW challenges can slow down the agency when it needs to purchase key materials or redirect researchers and staff from their focus of ensuring that our warfighting capabilities outpace adversarial militaries such as Russia or China. By using our acquisition platform to make it easier and faster to procure goods and services, we're helping the AFRL keep up on a global scale.

Our partner agencies have found that when they remove ineffective and outdated technology, discontinue processes that no longer work, and free expert staff from wasted time spent on legacy processes developed around legacy tooling not built for the specific needs of the public

sector, they can unlock greater effectiveness in their operations and are better positioned to realize their mission. Through a no-code, drag-and-drop platform, users of all levels of computer literacy can more rapidly handle complex, document-heavy processes with ease.

Bad Plumbing, Ineffective Service
A building with bad plumbing won't be able to deliver clean water to its residents. Likewise, ineffective and inefficient processes and technology won't be able to provide the world-class services its residents deserve.

We applaud Gov. Moore's efforts to fix Maryland's procurement plumbing. Simplifying, expediting, and modernizing the procurement process allows for technological innovation that will unlock the potential of Maryland's public workforce to provide the services all Maryland residents deserve.

We urge the members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee to vote favorably on Senate Bill 426.