



American Fintech Council Testimony

TO: Maryland Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Ashley Urisman, Director-State Government Affairs, American Fintech Council (AFC)

DATE: March 4, 2025

SUBJECT: House Bill 1294

Position: Support

Testimony:

Thank you Chair Wilson, and members of the Economic Matters committee. My name is Ashley Urisman, and I am the Director of State Government Affairs for the American Fintech Council (AFC). I am here today in support of House Bill 1294 (HB 1294).

AFC is the premier trade association representing the largest financial technology (Fintech) companies, including the biggest providers and largest number of Earned Wage Access (EWA) companies. Our mission is to promote a transparent, inclusive, and customer-centric financial system by supporting responsible innovation in financial services and encouraging sound public policy.

Before guidance from the Office of Financial Regulation pushed many responsible providers out of the state in 2023, more than 100,000 Marylanders benefitted from access to EWA services. We are grateful to Chair Wilson for sponsoring this bill to establish a revised regulatory framework which empowers responsible EWA providers to return to serving users in Maryland.

To ensure that EWA providers safely and effectively serve consumers, AFC has established clear standards on what constitutes responsible EWA and ensures users remain protected. Our standards require

- A voluntary no-cost option be made available for all users;
- Strong fee disclosures represented in a clear and transparent manner;
- No underwriting or credit checks and;
- Ability for users to cancel the EWA service at any time, meaning it does not have to be repaid.

We believe the guardrails set forth in HB 1294 reflect our standards. The bill creates an opportunity for both Maryland workers and EWA providers to build a stronger economy in the state.

Thank you again for considering this issue in a timely manner and seeking a pragmatic solution to regulation. I am happy to address any questions you may have.