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**February 25, 2025**

**Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison and Distinguished Members of  
the House Health and Government Operations Committee,**

**HB500: Procurement Reform Act of 2025**

The AAPI Caucus supports **HB500** because it can foster economic opportunities for AAPI and other minority-owned small businesses. By introducing measures that emphasize supplier diversity and workforce development, this bill will ensure that businesses from historically underrepresented communities, including AAPI entrepreneurs, have greater access to state contracts.

Many AAPI business owners face systemic barriers in procurement processes, including a lack of access to networks, capital, and resources. Including provisions such as the Minority Business Enterprise Program and workforce diversity requirements helps level the playing field for businesses that often face structural disadvantages.

Strengthening these opportunities will not only benefit Maryland's economy but will also encourage innovation and entrepreneurship within the AAPI community. AAPI-owned small businesses are a critical part of Maryland's economic landscape, and ensuring equitable access to procurement opportunities will help them continue to thrive and contribute to the state's growth.

Sincerely,

**Delegate Harry Bhandari, PhD**

**Chair, Maryland Asian American Pacific Islander Caucus**