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**TESTIMONY ON HB#0498 – FAVORABLE**

**Economic Development - Delivering Economic Competitiveness and Advancing Development Efforts (DECADE) Act**

**TO:** Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice Chair Wilkins, and members of the Ways & Means Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0498, Economic Development - Delivering Economic Competitiveness and Advancing Development Efforts (DECADE) Act**

This bill is part of the package that Governor Moore's work to Winning the Decade is dedicated to making Maryland the best destination for businesses to locate and grow. It will leverage departments within Maryland government and our agencies to support those efforts to provide economic growth management in Maryland. It reorganizes where in government the efforts will occur and how programs to manage economic development are implemented.

The plan for Winning the Decade begins by requiring the Department of Commerce to evaluate the potential employment and economic growth of the State's industry sectors and establish a certain list of industry sectors and activities to be considered for additional support. The reorganization starts by removing the Maryland Economic Development Commission and Commerce Subcabinet and then altering the designation, administration, and purposes of and eligibility for certain economic development programs. The bill will then assist Maryland economic development through altering the eligibility for and the calculation of certain economic development incentives.

With the current budget shortfall and the Federal decimation of people and funding for Maryland it is vital Maryland improve our economic development efforts and achieve better results from it.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass HB0498.**