



Wes Moore | Governor  
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor  
Kevin Anderson | Secretary of Commerce

**DATE:** January 30, 2025  
**BILL NO:** House Bill 258  
**BILL TITLE:** Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority – Alterations  
**COMMITTEE:** House Ways and Means Committee  
**POSITION:** Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports House Bill 258 - Economic Development - West North Avenue Development Authority - Alterations

### **Bill Summary:**

This legislation alters the administration and powers of the West North Avenue Development Authority (WNADA), on which Board the Secretary of Commerce or their designee serves. The bill also creates a special fund to carry out the purposes of WNADA, creates a Board of Directors for WNADA and generally establishes administrative requirements and processes for WNADA. House Bill 258 also removes the September 30, 2026 sunset date.

### **Background:**

Chapters 80 and 81, Acts of 2021, established WNADA for the purpose of developing a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy for a specific target area in Baltimore City. WNADA must support the development and approval of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan in the target area and the buffer zone to benefit (1) the residents; (2) housing; (3) neighborhoods; (4) economic development; and (5) transportation, including motor vehicles and pedestrians. WNADA must also work in coordination with the residents of the target area and the buffer zone to develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan. WNADA presented its comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy in early 2024.

### **Rationale:**

The Secretary of Commerce currently sits as a member of the West North Avenue Redevelopment Authority and upon passage of House Bill 258 will be a member of its Board of Directors. WNADA is a key driver of economic and community development in West North Avenue – a historically important east-west thoroughfare in Baltimore. Continued reinvestment in this area through WNADA is critical to improve the economic health and safety of this corridor in Baltimore, and House Bill 258 ensures WNADA has the capacity to do so.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 258.