



March 6, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama, Chair
231 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT** of **HB 1172** - Howard County - Economic Development Authority - Alterations Ho. Co. 14-26

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 1172. This legislation primarily makes minor technical corrections to Howard County Economic Authority governing code that has not been comprehensively updated for decades.

These edits have been tracked over time by Howard County counsel and reflect a running list of limited statutory updates identified through routine governance review.

The bill removes an outdated ex officio Board role and updates the Executive Director title to Chief Executive Officer to reflect current practice.

In addition, the legislation implements a Board-approved change to meeting frequency. During a monthly Board meeting, the Board Chair proposed moving to an every-other-month meeting schedule, and members present agreed. We were later advised that this change required a statutory amendment. Accordingly, the bill updates the code to allow the Board to meet every other month while preserving the Chair's authority to call additional meetings as needed.

This meeting cadence aligns with peer jurisdictions and allows for more substantive Board discussions and updates. Board members remain actively engaged through regular communication and committee work, including the Incentives and Executive Committees.

These are modest, practical updates that improve clarity and governance alignment. I respectfully request a favorable report on House Bill 1172.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Jones

Jennifer Jones
CEO, Howard County Economic Development Authority