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*Governor Wes Moore*

*Lt. Governor Aruna Miller*

*Secretary Walter L. Simmons*

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**Bill Number:** House Bill 1033  
**Title:** Department of Social and Economic Mobility – Maryland Chamber of Commerce Grant Program – Established (Business Networks Access Act)  
**Committee:** Economic Matters  
**Hearing Date:** March 3, 2026  
**Position:** Letter of Information

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Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Social and Economic Mobility (DoSEM) submits this Letter of Information regarding House Bill 1033, which would establish the Maryland Chamber of Commerce Grant Program to provide grants to chambers of commerce for (1) membership subsidies for underrepresented individuals and (2) inter-chamber events.

DoSEM’s work is focused on expanding access to opportunity—helping ensure Marylanders can access work, wages, and wealth by reducing barriers and strengthening pathways to prosperity. HB 1033 aligns with that mission by recognizing an often-overlooked driver of economic mobility: access to business networks. Chambers of commerce can be a key entry point to mentoring, peer learning, procurement readiness, professional services, and relationship-building that can accelerate business formation, growth, and job creation. This is particularly true for entrepreneurs and workers who have historically been excluded from traditional networks.

DoSEM works across systems to expand opportunity and reduce structural barriers. HB 1033 could complement that work by enabling chambers to lower the cost barrier to participation and to intentionally connect underrepresented individuals to the kinds of networks that support upward mobility. Inter-chamber events can also strengthen regional collaboration and reduce silos—helping share best practices, connect supply chains, and create entry points for new and emerging entrepreneurs.

If enacted, DoSEM would develop program guidance and the unified application required by the bill, conduct outreach to chambers across Maryland, and administer awards consistent with the specified eligibility criteria. DoSEM can implement HB 1033 with existing resources and anticipates that program administration can be structured to align with existing accountability practices as contemplated by the bill.

DoSEM appreciates the Committee’s consideration of HB 1033 and looks forward to working with stakeholders to ensure Marylanders—regardless of background or geography—can access the networks and opportunities that help turn work into wages and wages into wealth.

For additional information, please contact Ardy Kamali, Chief of External Affairs, Department of Social and Economic Mobility, at (410) 693-6642 or [ardy.kamali@maryland.gov](mailto:ardy.kamali@maryland.gov).