

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS House Bill 1300 – Maryland Commission for Women – Alterations

Good evening Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee,

My name is The Honorable Dr. Cashenna A. Cross, Councilmember At-Large for the City of Glenarden and former Mayor. I respectfully submit this testimony in support of House Bill 1300 with amendments.

House Bill 1300 strengthens the Maryland Commission for Women by transitioning the Executive Director to a merit-based position within the State Personnel Management System. This change promotes continuity, professionalism, and accountability in leadership.

The bill also modernizes the duties of the Commission, emphasizing research, identification of disparities, workforce development, and public awareness. These updates reflect the evolving needs of women across Maryland.

To strengthen implementation and long-term impact, I respectfully recommend the following amendments:

First, establish performance metrics and reporting requirements tied to measurable outcomes, including reductions in disparities and improvements in workforce participation.

Second, require coordination with local governments and community-based organizations to ensure alignment between State initiatives and local implementation.

Third, expand workforce and economic pathways, including STEM access, financial literacy, and re-entry support.

Fourth, include intersectional data collection to ensure equitable outcomes across populations.

Fifth, consider a stakeholder advisory structure that includes municipalities, nonprofits, and youth voices.

With these enhancements, House Bill 1300 will strengthen both structure and impact.

I respectfully urge a favorable report with amendments.

Respectfully submitted, The Honorable Dr. Cashenna A. Cross, DHumLitt Councilmember At-Large, City of Glenarden