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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1230

*Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Procurement – Alterations
Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee*

March 27, 2026

Senator Brian Feldman, Chairman
Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1230 – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Procurement – Alterations

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

The Prince George's Chamber of Commerce (PGCOC) respectfully submits this testimony in strong support of House Bill 1230. Founded in 1924, we represent more than 800 local businesses and serve as a voice for over one million employees across our county. Our members include contractors, suppliers, engineers, and professional service providers — many of whom are ready, willing, and able to compete for public infrastructure contracts. What they need are procurement systems that give them a fair shot. HB 1230 delivers that.

For too many of our member businesses, the biggest barrier to winning public contracts is not capacity — it is complexity. Duplicative registration requirements, eligibility frameworks that penalize growth, and limited pathways for veteran-owned firms have kept qualified businesses on the sideline. HB 1230 directly addresses each of these barriers.

The bill streamlines vendor registration by authorizing WSSC Water to accept existing county-based certifications. Businesses that have already completed a registration process elsewhere will not have to repeat it. It establishes a tiered participation framework that continues to prioritize the smallest local firms while creating a pathway for businesses that have grown beyond the “small” threshold — so that success does not become a penalty. And it formally recognizes veteran-owned and disabled veteran-owned businesses, opening a door that has long been closed to this community of entrepreneurs.

Water infrastructure is one of the most stable and enduring sources of public contracting in our region. The need does not go away. For our members, that represents a reliable pipeline of opportunity — if the procurement system lets them in. HB 1230 widens that



door. More businesses competing means a stronger regional economy, a deeper supplier base, and more dollars staying in Prince George's County.

The PGCOC has spent a century fighting for policies that make it easier to do business in Prince George's County. HB 1230 is exactly that kind of policy — practical, targeted, and built around what businesses need to compete.

We respectfully urge the Committee to give House Bill 1230 a **favorable report**.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexander K. Austin

Alexander Austin
President & CEO
Prince George's Chamber of Commerce

Founded in 1924 • 800+ Local Business Members • Top 20 Business Organization in Prince George's County • Voice for 1M+ Employees

HB1230 -- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

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House Bill 1230 -- Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Procurement - Alterations PG/MC 102-26
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 31, 2026
Support

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), the voice of business in Metro Maryland, supports House Bill 1230 -- *Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission - Procurement - Alterations PG/MC 102-26*.

House Bill 1230 repeals the name of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission Office of Supplier Diversity, requires the Commission to name the Office, and alters the purpose and duties of the Office. The bill further alters the local small business enterprise program to be the business participation program.

The Chamber supports WSSC Water's inclusive and forward-thinking approach to expanding procurement opportunities for local, small, veteran-owned, and disabled veteran-owned businesses. This legislation acknowledges the diverse range of enterprises that serve the utility across local, state, and regional levels and aims to eliminate barriers that disproportionately impact smaller firms. Many local and small businesses face contracting challenges that larger firms do not, particularly the complex administrative processes required simply to register as a vendor. By streamlining these processes, the bill helps ensure that qualified businesses can reach the starting line and meaningfully compete for procurement opportunities.

House Bill 1230 further modernizes the procurement framework by removing duplicative steps, recognizing certifications from other public agencies, and adopting a self-certification process that supports business growth. It strengthens the broader economic ecosystem by keeping customer dollars circulating within local communities and aligning with state priorities, including support for veteran-owned and disabled veteran-owned businesses. With WSSC Water planning to invest \$4.8 billion through its 2026 capital program, it is essential that local businesses are well positioned to participate in this major economic opportunity. This legislation provides the pathway to ensure that participation becomes both possible and more equitable.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce supports House Bill 1230 and respectfully requests a favorable report.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), on behalf of its members, champions the growth of business opportunities, strategic infrastructure investments, and a strong workforce to position Metro Maryland as a premier regional, national, and global business location. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent, non-profit membership organization.

*Brian Levine | Vice President of Government Affairs
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
51 Monroe Street | Suite 1800
Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-738-0015 | www.mcccmd.com*

WSSC Water Testimony HB 1230 Senate Education, Ene

Uploaded by: Kiyon Harley

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Kishia L. Powell

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy & the Environment Committee,

WSSC Water respectfully submits this statement in strong support of HB 1230 – Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Procurement Alterations. This legislation provides targeted administrative updates that modernize vendor registration, strengthen participation pathways for local and small businesses, and help ensure Maryland businesses are positioned to compete for the billions of dollars invested in water infrastructure across our region.

The legislation does not alter or replace the Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program. The MBE Program continues to operate in accordance with Maryland law governing minority business participation. This legislation instead complements existing participation programs by expanding additional pathways for businesses competing for WSSC Water contracts.

As an anchor institution, WSSC Water provides essential water and wastewater services to nearly 2 million residents in Prince George’s and Montgomery Counties and supports approximately \$114.9 billion in regional economic output. Over the past five years, WSSC Water spent \$1.3 billion with Maryland businesses, including nearly \$635 million within our service district.

Over the next six years, WSSC Water will invest \$4.8 billion through our Capital Improvements Program. Economic impact analysis shows that every \$1 million invested in water infrastructure supports approximately 15-18 jobs across the regional economy. HB 1230 helps ensure that Maryland businesses and Maryland workers are positioned to participate in these investments. This represents real economic impact – Maryland businesses securing contracting opportunities and Maryland workers helping build the infrastructure that supports our communities.

WSSC Water is committed to advancing a vision of sustained and transformative change. This legislation is a practical and essential part of that effort. It modernizes our business participation framework and allows us to better support the ecosystem of small and local businesses that help

operate, maintain, and enhance nearly 12,000 miles of critical infrastructure. These updates help ensure that customer dollars invested in our water systems continue circulating within Maryland's economy, supporting businesses, workers, and communities throughout our region.

WSSC Water worked closely with vendors and industry stakeholders during the development of this legislation. Input was gathered through outreach events, vendor engagement sessions, and ongoing discussions with businesses that regularly participate in WSSC Water contracting opportunities. Based on this engagement and feedback from elected officials and stakeholders, several modifications were made to the bill as originally introduced.

As currently amended, the legislation advances the following:

1. **Clarifies the responsibilities of the Office of Supplier Diversity and Inclusion (OSDI)** and authorizes WSSC Water to update the Office's name through the public regulatory process, if necessary, to remain legally durable as business and economic development programs evolve.
2. **Modernizes vendor registration** by allowing WSSC Water to recognize certifications from other public agencies. For example, if a business is certified as small or local by Prince George's County, Montgomery County, or another public entity, WSSC Water may accept that certification—removing duplicative administrative steps while maintaining program standards.
3. **Clarifies OSDI's role in administering business participation programs and monitoring compliance**, ensuring statutory language accurately reflects current operational responsibilities.
4. **Updates the Small Local Business Enterprise (SLBE) framework** to expand opportunities for local, small, veteran-owned, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses using preference tools authorized in this bill. The amendments maintain WSSC Water's intent to continue providing the strongest preference for small and local businesses.
5. **Authorizes regulations supporting workforce engagement and local economic benefit** within WSSC Water's service district, including standards for contractor good faith efforts related to local hiring, workforce training initiatives, and reporting on workforce residency and local economic activity.

Collectively, these updates respond directly to the needs consistently identified by vendors through our engagement efforts:

- clearer procurement processes
- fewer duplicative administrative steps; and
- a framework that keeps pace with the scale of infrastructure investment ahead

When operationalized, these improvements will strengthen accessibility to compete for procurement opportunities, improve processing efficiency, and support the continued development of capable Maryland firms and local workers. Without these targeted statutory updates, current language may unintentionally limit the ability of capable Maryland businesses to compete for larger infrastructure

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Committee

March 27, 2026

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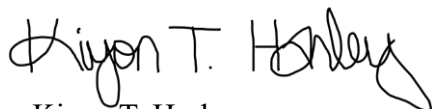
projects as contract values continue to increase. HB 1230 helps ensure that firms ready to perform this work are not excluded from opportunities due to outdated administrative frameworks.

Water infrastructure is often viewed only through the lens of pipes, pumping stations, and treatment facilities. In reality, it is also the foundation of public health, community stability, and economic vitality. HB 1230 strengthens the administrative framework that enables Maryland businesses to meaningfully support WSSC Water's mission of delivering safe, reliable, and sustainable water and wastewater services while helping ensure that infrastructure investments generate meaningful economic opportunity within our communities.

When WSSC Water invests billions of dollars in critical infrastructure, Maryland businesses and Maryland workers should have every opportunity to compete for and help deliver that work. HB 1230 strengthens the framework necessary to support that outcome while preserving existing participation programs.

For these reasons, WSSC Water respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 1230. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kiyon T. Harley

Director

Office of Supplier Diversity & Inclusion

Senate - Testimony of Strong Support for HB 1230.p

Uploaded by: Mauricio Vasquez

Position: FAV



Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County
10400 Connecticut Ave. Suite 308
Kensington, MD 20895
(301) 332-2686

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT
BILL PG/MC 102-26 (HB 1230)
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission – Procurement Alterations**

Submitted to:
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Date: March 27, 2026

On behalf of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County (HCCMC), which represents hundreds of Hispanic-owned small and local businesses across Montgomery County and the broader Washington Suburban area, we submit this written testimony in strong support of PG/MC 102-26 (HB 1230). We are pleased to see that the bill passed the House with minimal changes and has now moved to the Senate. This legislation represents a thoughtful, forward-thinking modernization of WSSC Water’s procurement statute that will expand meaningful opportunities for our member businesses while strengthening Maryland’s economy.

We commend WSSC Water for its leadership in creating pathways for local, small, veteran-owned, and disabled veteran-owned businesses. Small and local businesses like those in our Chamber often face unnecessary administrative barriers just to register as vendors—an entry point that larger firms navigate with ease. HB 1230 directly addresses this by streamlining vendor registration through self-certification where appropriate, recognizing certifications from Prince George’s County, Montgomery County, and other public agencies, and eliminating duplicative paperwork—all while maintaining the highest standards of program integrity.

These practical changes open doors for qualified Hispanic-owned and other small businesses that have historically been shut out before they could even compete. The bill wisely introduces tiered preferences that extend beyond traditional small local businesses to include firms based in (or with 25% of employees residing in) Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, with additional preferences for Maryland businesses outside the service area. It also modernizes the "Local Small Business Enterprise Program" into the broader Business Participation Program, ensuring small and local businesses retain the highest preference levels.

The economic stakes could not be higher. WSSC Water plans to invest \$4.8 billion over the next six years through its Capital Improvements Program—including \$715.5 million in FY26 alone. For every \$1 million spent, 15–18 jobs (direct, indirect, and induced) are created. Over the past five years, WSSC Water has already spent \$1.3 billion with Maryland businesses, nearly \$635 million of which stayed within its service district. By keeping these customer dollars circulating locally through streamlined access and local hiring priorities, HB 1230 will build wealth, create jobs, and drive economic growth right here in our communities.

We are particularly pleased that the bill authorizes regulations to promote local hiring and recruitment, apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, skills training, workforce development, and workforce residency reporting—measures that will directly benefit the residents and workers our Chamber serves. The legislation also thoughtfully provides preferences for veteran-owned and disabled veteran-owned businesses, aligning with state priorities. Importantly, HB 1230 does not amend, limit, or affect WSSC Water's strong Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) Program, which has reached record participation levels (39% overall, with MBE prime contractor awards rising to 68% since FY2023). Instead, it complements these legacy programs to maximize opportunities for small, local, and diverse businesses.

This bill is a true win-win: it was developed with input from the very business community it will impact, strikes the right balance among all stakeholders, and ensures that WSSC Water's massive investments continue to strengthen Maryland's economy.



Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County
10400 Connecticut Ave. Suite 308
Kensington, MD 20895
(301) 332-2686

HCCMC respectfully urges the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to advance PG/MC 102-26 (HB 1230) without delay. We stand ready to provide any additional information or oral testimony if requested.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Vásquez', is positioned above the printed name.

Mauricio Vásquez, Ph.D., PMP

Executive Director

Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County

mvasquez@hccmc.org