



---

*Governor Wes Moore*

*Lt. Governor Aruna Miller*

*Secretary Walter L. Simmons*

---

**Bill Number:** Senate Bill 539  
**Title:** Department of Social and Economic Mobility – Workforce Opportunities Grant Program and Fund  
**Committee:** Finance  
**Hearing Date:** March 11, 2026  
**Position:** Letter of Information

---

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Social and Economic Mobility (DoSEM) submits this Letter of Information regarding Senate Bill 539. This bill would establish a Workforce Opportunities Grant Program and a corresponding special, nonlapsing Workforce Opportunities Grant Fund within DoSEM to support the planning and execution of workforce events and job fairs that connect job seekers with employers.

SB 539 is designed to strengthen a practical “front door” to employment by investing in workforce events and job fairs that directly connect Marylanders to hiring employers across multiple industries and regions. In practice, these events can:

- Expand access to work by bringing hiring employers and job seekers into the same place, particularly in regions or communities where transportation barriers, limited networks, or limited exposure to employers can reduce access to opportunities;
- Improve wages by connecting job seekers to employers with immediate hiring needs across sectors, and by supporting events that are structured to move participants from interest to interview to hire;
- Build pathways to wealth by accelerating entry into stable employment and creating repeatable, regionally accessible hiring touchpoints that can connect Marylanders to advancement opportunities and employer-connected career pathways over time.

Subject to available funding, DoSEM would establish a competitive grant application process for nonprofits, local workforce development boards, and partnerships (including employers and community organizations) that can run events across regions, engage multiple industries, and demonstrate capacity to connect job seekers directly with employers. Grant funds could be used for outreach, logistics, venues, support services, staffing, and event coordination.

The bill also requires an annual report beginning in 2028 with metrics including event locations, counts of participating employers and job seekers, and job placement/hires resulting from funded events. DoSEM can implement SB 539 using existing resources.

DoSEM appreciates the committee’s consideration of Senate Bill 539 and is available to answer questions and provide technical information.