



February 26, 2026

The Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins, Chair  
The Honorable Jessica Feldmark, Vice Chair  
House Ways and Means Committee  
130 & 131 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Samuel Epps, President, Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO on  
HB1247 - Prince George's County - Tax Increment Financing -  
Extraordinary Development District - Alterations PG425-25**  
Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Thank you Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB1247. My name is Samuel Epps. I am the President of the Metro Washington Council of the AFL-CIO. I also serve as the Secretary-Treasurer of the Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO. Our members are the backbone of the hospitality, service, and construction industries across the state.

HB1247 authorizes Prince George's County to issue bonds to support the construction of The Sphere at National Harbor. **It is the position of the Metro Washington Council that HB1247 must be amended to include labor standards and agreements.**

It is our experience that, without labor standards, this project will not create quality jobs for Prince George's County residents or Marylanders from nearby jurisdictions. Both the State of Maryland and Prince George's County are subsidizing this project with taxpayer money. Their investment needs to be protected and workers' livelihood also needs to be protected.

That's why the project must include a project labor agreement on its construction and labor peace on its operations. The deal as announced by Sphere Entertainment, the State of Maryland, and Prince George's County does not include these assurances. We absolutely need them.

Toward that goal, we urge the Committee to amend HB1247 to protect workers and ensure quality jobs are created by this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.