



February 11, 2020

**FAVORABLE Support of SB 442/HB 313:
Public-Private Partnership Agreements - Minority Business Enterprise
Programs**

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

Senate Bill 442 proposes to restore the applicability of Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) program to public-private partnerships (P3s).

As a certified small business owner in Maryland, I am fully aware of the benefits of public-private partnerships. P3s enable greater private sector participation, expertise, and mitigate risk for state agencies engaged in large infrastructure projects.

Restoring the application of the MBE program to P3s would benefit my Minority Business Enterprise for several reasons. MBE program would expand contracting opportunities for certified Minority Business Enterprises. Having the program restored at least I would have a better chance to do business in Maryland.

After the completion of the 2017 Business Disparities in the Maryland Market Area study, Chapter 340 of the 2017 Maryland Code reauthorized the MBE program for five more years. However, it did not restore the application of the program to P3s. Senate Bill 442 would restore that application, enabling my Minority Business Enterprise to thrive in Maryland.

Thus, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 442/House Bill 313.

Respectfully,

LaTasha R. Ward
Co-Founder/ Vice President of Business Development