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**SB-188**  
**Finance Committee**  
**Public Health - Misbranded Food - Meat Products**  
**Thursday, Feb. 6 @ 1pm**  
**Position: UNFAVORABLE**

Good afternoon Chair, Vice Chair and members of the Senate Finance Committee, by name is Brenda Sanders and I am the owner of The Greener Kitchen, a plant-based restaurant and catering service in Baltimore Maryland. We specialize in plant-based soul food and we are the co-host of the Baltimore annual "Veggie Soul Fest" that attracts thousands of attendees who come to be educated in plant-based culinary cuisine and health education.

As am impacted business owner, SB -188 would affect my company in the following ways:

1. I would be limited in labeling my veggie soul food in culturally relevant ways to attract my African-American customer base who want veggie food that is similar to the food they love;
2. I would have to absorb the cost for the additional training costs to train my staff to ensure that my staff do not go to jail for a violation or cause me to be fined thousands of dollars as a small business; and
3. Our Veggie Soul Fest would be transformed from a culturally relevant event for people of color, where they can eat plant-based food that they recognize, to an event with food names that have nothing to do with our rich history and Black culture that we celebrate despite the vestiges of slavery embedded in our Soul Food.
4. Me and my team would constantly work in fear that if we mess up can label one of our great veggie foods wrong, we could go to jail. We already are subject to regular sanitation inspections and now we would have to constantly worry about indiscriminate arrests or fines because the bill language is vague regarding what is "meat".

Black plant-based restaurant owners should not have to operate under these types of onerous requirements that strip us of our dignity and force us to accommodate the businesses of other communities that do not work and serve the needs of our Baltimore communities.

Therefore, I respectfully requests that SB-188 receive an unfavorable report.