

Written Testimony in Favor of SB 933/HB 747
State and Local Procurement – Payment Practices of Sharon Moore Jackson

Dear Chairwoman Pendergrass and the Health & Government Operations Committee:

My name is Sharon Moore Jackson. I am the President of S.M. Jackson Government Business Solutions, a Maryland-based, MDOT and Prince George's County MBE Certified consulting firm that specializes in Diversity, Inclusion, MBE Compliance, Outreach and Community Engagement. I am also Vice Chair of the Bi-County Business Roundtable, a regional advocacy organization representing businesses throughout the State of Maryland. Delegate Darryl Barnes is the Founder and President.

I have over 30+ years of real and substantial experience in the MBE arena and with that understanding and passion, I launched my consulting firm in 2017, after retiring from the State of Maryland in 2016. To give you a little background on my experience, I began working in the MBE field in 1975, in the Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE) (aka, Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA)). In 1980 OMBE transitioned to the Executive Department as GOMA. I have served as MBE Administrator, Special Assistant, Outreach Manager, Deputy Director, Acting Executive Director, for Maryland Department of Human Resources, Prince George's Board of Education, and Prince George's County Supplier Diversity and Diversity Division, in both management and leadership positions, advocating on behalf of minority businesses. One of the greatest impediments to sustaining growth of minority-owned and small businesses, is prompt payments. Late payments cripple and often cause minority-owned and small businesses to go out of business because of a lack of cash flow. The disparities with access to capital between minority and non-minority businesses remains the most important factor limiting the establishment, expansion and growth of minority-owned businesses, and that current financial burden places a greater burden on minority entrepreneurs. With that being said, the issue of prompt payments, especially for minority and small businesses, continues to be a significant problem. The only remedy seems to be going to court, which is costly. For many minority-owned and small businesses, going to court is not an option because of the legal fees and the length of time it takes to get on the court docket.

Without adequate capital, minority-owned firms will fail and won't realize their full potential. The passage of SB 933/HB 747 provides assurances that timely payment for services rendered by minority-owned and small businesses will be processed within 15 days and therefore does not create an unnecessary financial hardship.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Moore Jackson, President
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