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Senate Bill 77 - Energy Efficiency - Net-Zero Homes - Contract Preferences

Testimony of Megha Sevalia (Favorable)

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee. I am pleased to present Senate Bill 77, which directs additional funding opportunities to small, minority, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses in the clean energy construction industry.

SB 77:

Requires the Department of Housing and Community Development to give preference to loan applications for projects that will use the services of small, minority, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses.

- Loans specifically for net-zero homes (homes that produce as much energy as they use) from the Energy-Efficient Homes Construction Fund in the clean energy industry, particularly those businesses that provide employment for those trained through workforce development programs supported by the Strategic Energy Investment Fund and the Clean Energy Workforce Account.

Senate Bill 77 allows our State to continue its efforts to increase energy efficiency and support the Minority Business Enterprise program goals. This bill will not adversely affect State or local government operations or finances, but has a potentially meaningful impact on wealth and equity opportunities in Maryland. Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 77. I respectfully request a favorable report.