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Environment and
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 14, 2021

RE: Testimony HB650 - Minority Business Enterprises - Sexual and Gender Minorities (Imari's Business Pride Act)

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

For the record, I am Delegate Regina T. Boyce, testifying on HB650 - Minority Business Enterprises - Sexual and Gender Minorities (Imari's Business Pride Act). HB650 alters the definition of "socially and economically disadvantaged individual" for purposes of certifying certain minority business enterprises to include certain sexual and gender minorities.

Currently Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and California, and a host of cities (14) already have recognized certified LGBT Business Certified Enterprises (LGBTBES) with the following states in the process to recognize LGBTBES: Oregon, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Connecticut, and Illinois.

In November of 2019, Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) approved policy to include The National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) Certified LGBT Business Enterprises® (Certified LGBTBES®) in contracting and procurement opportunities. In 2018 our very own Baltimore City, through Executive Order 2018-02, recognized LGBTQ-Owned business entities, those with 51% or more ownership by LGBTQ+ individuals.

With more diverse providers, Maryland can achieve statewide goals and save taxpayer's dollars by creating greater competition while driving down bid prices. LGBT business owners add \$1.7 Trillion to the US economy.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my constituent, Terrance Threweatt, who submitted this bill request in honor of this brother, Imari, who passed away. Imari designed and sold gender-affirming apparel for transmen.

Thank you for your time and consideration of HB650. I urge a favorable report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Regina T. Boyce".

Regina T. Boyce