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To: Members of House Appropriations Committee
Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake

Re: Letter of Information for House Bill (HB) 842 – Environmental Justice - Investment in Infrastructure Construction Projects

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents more than 200 electrical and low voltage businesses who employ approximately 15, 000 workers in the mid-Atlantic region. In addition, IEC Chesapeake has approximately 1,000 electrical apprentices.

IEC Chesapeake would like to provide the Committees with informational comments opposing the required use of Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) in this legislation. The required use of PLAs creates a disadvantage for merit shop contractors in Maryland. More than eighty percent (80%) of construction in Maryland is performed by non-union contractors. It is unwise public policy to put merit shop contractors at a competitive disadvantage on construction projects in Maryland. In addition, the mandated requirement of PLAs may significantly drive up the costs of state projects at time when the state is facing significant budgetary challenges. We respectfully ask that the Committees eliminate the requirements for the use of PLAs.

IEC Chesapeake supports the language in the bill promoting apprenticeship programs. Finally, IEC Chesapeake is requesting that the Justice Forty Committee adds a member representing merit shop contractors.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Grant Shmelzer, Executive Director of IEC Chesapeake, at 1-301-621-9545, extension 114 or at gshmelzer@iec-chesapeake.com or Kevin O’Keeffe at 410-382-7844 or at kevin@kokeeffelaw.com.

About Us

Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) Chesapeake represents members throughout Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Our headquarters are located in Laurel, Maryland. IEC Chesapeake has an extensive apprenticeship program for training electricians. In addition, IEC Chesapeake promotes green economic growth by providing education and working with contractor members, industry partners, government policy makers and inspectors to increase the use of renewable energy.

