



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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November 16, 2021

Senator Clarence K. Lam, Senate Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
420 Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Courtney Watson, House Delegation Chair
Howard County Delegation
216 House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT:** Ho. Co. Legislative Bond Initiative: Maryland Innovation Center

Dear Chair Lam, Chair Watson and Delegation Members,

I am proud to express my support for this project, which would establish funding to renovate the Maryland Innovation Center.

The Maryland Innovation Center is an important component of Howard County's economic and business growth. The Center is a 60,000 square foot facility serving as the nexus of innovation and small business creation and support for Howard County and the wider region. Over 30 small companies and strategic partners in the emerging technology, innovation and cybersecurity fields call the Maryland Innovation Center home.

Innovation and economic opportunity continue to be priorities for us. On my 100th day in office, I was proud to sign the MOU with the Howard County Economic Development Authority to launch the Maryland Innovation Center. The Delegation's support for this \$300,000 bond initiative will fund renovations to the Center's second and fourth floor spaces to accommodate small businesses. Funding will also support infrastructure upgrades and exterior renovations to draw additional businesses to the Center. A modernized Maryland Innovation Center will help grow our local economy and provide growth opportunities for small and minority-owned businesses.

Howard County's small businesses have faced an uncertain economic outlook throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The Maryland Innovation Center is a unique asset for Howard County's entrepreneurs. I urge support for this project so that the current and future small businesses can grow strong, innovate, and contribute to Howard County's economic success.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive