




MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 30, 2020
TO: Labor Committee
FROM: Colin Tarbert, President and CEO 
POSITION: Support
SUBJECT: Council Bill 19-0452 - Employee-Owned Businesses – Reporting

INTRODUCTION

The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) is reporting on City Council Bill 19-0452 introduced by Councilmembers Henry, Dorsey, Cohen, Clarke, and Burnett.

PURPOSE

The purpose of Bill 19-0452 is to provide annual reports to the Mayor and the City Council regarding certain Baltimore City employee-owned businesses; defining certain terms; and specifying the contents of the required reports.

BRIEF HISTORY

Baltimore City boasts a strong network of support for employee-owned businesses, commonly referred to as worker-owned cooperatives. Advocates for such businesses have promoted worker-owned cooperatives as an effective strategy for entrepreneurship, business ownership, succession planning, retention and community wealth building, particularly for members of marginalized communities, by lowering the barriers to entry to starting a business. The Baltimore Development Corporation is committed to helping existing worker-owned cooperatives grow. Through initiatives with both service providers for cooperatives as well as worker-owners of local cooperatively owned businesses, the BDC plans to understand what cooperatives need to scale. The report(s) generated by Bill 19-0452 could further confirm assessments of obstacles encountered by employee-owned businesses.

Bill 19-0452 indicates that required information shall be limited to only those employee-owned businesses that have identified themselves to the city as being an employee-owned business. While BDC maintains records of businesses assisted, the BDC does not currently capture data specific to employee-owned businesses, or their utilization of BDC's programs. In order to fulfill the requirements of Bill 19-0452, the current tracking platform would require a modification and resources to do so.

FISCAL IMPACT

BDC currently does not capture employee-owned business data, tracking this information will require a modification of our tracking and reporting systems. BDC currently does not have the resources and would need such to modify the system.

AGENCY POSITION

The Baltimore Development Corporation supports Council Bill 19-0452 for the purposes of identifying obstacles and lessening the effects of difficulties faced by employee-owned businesses.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kim Clark at (410) 837-9305 or at kclark@baltimoredevelopment.com.

cc: Nicholas Blendy

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