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LT. GOVERNOR BROWN HOLDS MBE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Women and Minority Business Owners Share Ideas to Advance the MBE and SBR Programs

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 4, 2014) - Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown hosted a roundtable discussion with small, minority and women business owners and advocates on Wednesday in Annapolis, seeking their ideas for moving Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Small Business Reserve (SBR) programs forward.

"Maryland has earned a national reputation as a leader in minority inclusion because our strength stems from our diversity," said Lt. Governor Brown. "Our program is constantly evolving and input from the business community can help us remove barriers that inhibit equal access within the State contracting arena."

Under the O'Malley-Brown Administration, payments to MBEs have increased by 60 percent from \$1.1 billion in FY2008 to \$1.8 billion in FY2013. Payments through the SBR Program have increased over 100 percent from \$122 million in FY2007 to \$282 million in FY2013.

Twenty-six business owners and advocates engaged in the discussion which covered topics such as prompt payment to subcontractors, the unbundling of large contracts to create more prime contracting opportunities, compliance and enforcement of existing procurement regulations and access to capital.

Special Secretary Zenita Wickham Hurley of the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) highlighted two of the O'Malley-Brown Administration's newest initiatives targeting small and minority-owned businesses. The first helps potential bidders identify which agencies buy what they sell by providing forecasting reports on GOMA's website for agency-specific solicitations expected to exceed \$100,000. The second requires GOMA to review the minority participation goals placed on statewide master contracts and contracts over \$25 million and is designed to ensure that all MBE opportunities are being identified at the onset of the procurement process.

"This has always been a very engaged group of stakeholders," commented Secretary Hurley. "We heard some great ideas and learned that we need to engage the minority business community with more frequency."

GOMA committed to hosting quarterly roundtable discussions with the participants as well as the broader stakeholder community. Dates, times and locations for the meetings will be posted on the agency's website at www.goma.maryland.gov as soon as they are available.



Roundtable participants included:

Monique Anderson, TCE, Inc.

C. Gail Bassett, TCE, Inc.

Carmen Braxton, Braxton Educational Services and Training

Candice Burke, IHAS Care Management Services

Anita Hanshaw, Ideal Electrical Supply Corporation

Dottie Li, Trans Pacific Communications

Natalia Luis, M. Luis Construction Co., Inc.

Stella Miller, Stella May Contracting

Necole Parker, The ELOCEN Group, LLC

Diane Peters, Strategic Training and Resources

Charles Ramos, CR Dynamics & Associates, Inc.

Major F. Riddick, Jr., Strategic Solutions Center, LLC

Claretta Rideout, DeQuan's Construction, LLC

Kevin Schell, The ELOCEN Group, LLC

Shreedhar Shah Shah & Associates

Dana Brewington Stebbins, Esq., The Cornelius Group

Venkat Subramanian, Angarai International, Inc.

Ardania Williams, Lendana Construction Company, Inc.

Diosa Woods, iiBis, Inc. Doris

Cammack-Spencer, Southern Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce
Wayne Frazier, Md. Washington Minority Companies Association
Tracey Jeter, Minority Supplier Development Council, Capital Region
Pless Jones, Sr., Maryland Minority Contractors Association
Enrique Melendez, Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Andre Rogers, Prince George's County Black Chamber of Commerce
Delegate Barbara Robinson, District 40, Baltimore City

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