

GBBCC HISTORY FROM TWO OF ITS FOUNDERS, BARBARA ROBINSON, AND BARRY HAMPTON

1. What motivated you to establish the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce (GBBCC) and what was the initial vision behind the creation?

The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce (GBBCC) was organized in 2006 to be a voice for Black owned and operated businesses in Baltimore. When GBBCC was first organized we envisioned an organization designed to enhance the opportunities for black-owned businesses in Baltimore. We also wanted to address the need for black business owners to be aware of and take part in legislation that impacts the economic development of Baltimore's black business community.

Small business development which includes minority business enterprises (MBE) and women owned business enterprises (WBE), is the backbone of economic development in America. Employment opportunities are necessary to revive the economy that is presently in a state of depression. It is more important now than ever before to help strengthen the business climate in Maryland to increase the chances of more jobs.

For more than 50 years Barbara Robinson has been an advocate for minority businesses and women owned businesses. As a board member of several organizations in Maryland, she became aware that many of the organizations had similar interests and involvement; however, some of them were not aware of the similar services provided by other organizations. Many were operating in a silo. Barbara Robinson and Ray Haysbert also realized that many minority businesses were unaware of various legislation and their impact on certain populations of people, such as seniors, women, minorities, people with intellectual challenges and ex-offenders.

Realizing the need for minority business representation expanded farther than the Baltimore Metropolitan area, in 2008 late Ray Haysbert, Barry Hampton and Barbara Robinson called together business leaders, community activists, community leaders, elected officials, and members of various organizations, and formed a coalition called LITSOM. LITSOM is an acronym that stands for Legislation in the State of Maryland.

2. Share the story of how GBCC was founded and the key steps taken during its initial stages to establish its presence in the Baltimore area.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created July 30, 1953, when it was signed into law by then President Eisenhower. The Council for Equal Business Opportunity (CEBO) was formed in 1967, initially founded by the Ford Foundation. Samuel Daniels was the Executive Director from 1967 to 1989. His office was in a building on Eutaw Street in Baltimore. Ophelia Bell was his Executive Assistant. CEBO provided training for minority businesses and hired companies such as mine to provide the training.

After Sam, Michael Gaines Sr. became the director of CEBO. In my absence, Michael Gaines and Barry Hampton hosted my business reach-out talk-radio program on WEAA Morgan State University's radio station. On that show we interviewed authors and entrepreneurs and business people. We sometimes conducted on-air business development seminars. Excerpts from my second book, *"Yes You Can: How to start and operate a business while pursuing your personal goals,"* have been used in the business classes at the University of the District of Columbia in Washington D.C.

When I first started in business in 1985, I was in SBA's 8(a) program. I then contracted with SBA to help small businesses in the 7(j) program. At that time, I realized that we must form an organization that was really providing the services that small businesses needed. Minority businesses could be certified by the city, by the state, the federal

government, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, Montgomery County, and Nashville Tennessee and participate in the procurement process but they were not certified to do so.

In June 1988, Ray Haysbert, and Denise Chilsom, who was founder of the Black Data Processing organization, were my first guests on WEAA. We discussed the need for a city-wide organization to help black and women owned and operated small businesses in Baltimore. The state identified a small business as fifty employees or less. Ray, Barry, and I wanted to concentrate on those businesses that were called the "Mom and Pop shops" businesses that had one or more employees.

In 1985 Barbara Webb and Delores Snell, who were the directors of the Management Development Center, a government agency created by then Governor William Donald Schaefer, provided small businesses with state contracts. However, there were more white companies seeking contracts than black businesses. In 2000 Ray was assisting with the formation of a company to help small businesses called EDGE (Economic Development through Growing Entrepreneurs) and met weekly at the Park Circle Business Center. However, when that did not appear to attract minority businesses, we discussed the need for forming a city-wide organization of minority businesses.

Louis Fields, a business colleague, called me one night while I was still working in my downtown office and asked to meet to discuss forming a Baltimore City Black Chamber of Commerce. Approximately ten minority business owners met at the NAACP headquarters in November 2005. When they learned there were no immediate contracts, they were not interested in continuing the discussion about forming an organization. However, when we met to discuss the Chamber, only four showed up Barry Hampton, Ray Haysbert, Barbara Robinson, and Louis Fields. Louis Fields wanted us to form the organization and pay him a salary to be the executive director. We did not think we had enough business for an executive director and when we refused, Louis Fields stopped attending the meetings.

3. What were the major obstacles or challenges encountered in establishing GBBCC and how did you overcome them?

Minority businesses in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s were not as organized as they are today. Government agencies did not provide services geared toward the development of minority black owned and operated businesses, especially those owned and operated by a black woman. The government was not trusting of minority businesses because minority businesses were usually identified as white women. In certain cases, although the business was listed as a woman owned and operated company, a visit by a government representative to the location of several women businesses found that a man was directing the operations suggesting that the woman was not managing the business operations, thereby the business could not be listed as a “women-owned and operated company.

One major challenge I encountered was getting the businesses to organize into one organization. When minority businesses have worked hard in the community to establish themselves as reliable businesses, they are not easily going to relinquish the position as “the boss.” Trying to determine who will be president, board chair, chief executive officer, or anyone in a leadership position, was difficult to come together as one company.

I can recall an incident of a man who owned a company that was attempting to subcontract with my company. When we were about to seal the deal, just before I signed any papers, I extended my hand to shake his hand. He quickly withdrew his hand and put both of his hands behind his back and said, “I’m sorry, but I don’t shake the hands of women.”

I stared at him, dazed, not wanting to say what was on my mind. I quickly thought, “Do I need him or does he need me.” I tried not to show indignation. I realized he was seeking a financial opportunity from my company for his company, thereby making money for himself too. I did not say a word. I picked up my pocketbook, put my writing pen back into my pocketbook, took the paper we had been writing on, and folded

it and put it into my pocketbook. I deliberately took my time and slowly removed my reading glasses, put them into the glass case and took out my sunglasses, put on my sunglasses, squared my shoulders, held my head up high in a haughty gesture and said, “I don’t think we have anymore to discuss since I own the company, I am a woman, and I don’t do business with a company owned by a man who doesn’t shake women’s hands. You are the one losing money.” I then walked out of his office without saying another word.

4. What are some notable milestones or achievements that GBBCC has accomplished since its inception?

December 18, 2011, Delegate Barbara A. Robinson, GBBCC Board Chair, and Lance Lucas, GBBCC President (now deceased), coordinated a meeting between the following organizations: the NAACP, the Baltimore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the GBBCC, Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake and her administrative team and department heads, to address MBE/WBE/DBE economic development issues and methods of improving the relationship and methods of doing business with the City of Baltimore.

January 15, 2010, the GBBCC was one of the founding groups of the Legislation in the State of Maryland Coalition, (L.I.T.S.O.M). LITSOM is the brainchild of the late Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr., and Chairwoman Delegate Barbara A. Robinson. LITSOM was formed to represent in Annapolis all minority business enterprises and women-owned business enterprises in the State of Maryland, and to support, oppose, suggest, and/or introduce legislation that affect their business success. LITSOM had the largest minority and women owned business representation in Annapolis, with over 350 MBE/WBE/DBE represented and in attendance on January 15, 2013.

LITSOM is comprised of minority businesses, women owned businesses, and minority business leaders from across Maryland, including Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore. LITSOM was formed to address the needs of minority and women owned businesses that needed to be aware and participate in legislation that impact them politically, financially, economically, and socially.

Since its beginning, LITSOM has grown to represent more than three hundred businesses. These leaders come together to address legislation that impact them as business owners and to support elected officials who represent their interest. LITSOM members include African Americans, Asian Americans, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Korean Merchants, Native Americans, and women business owners.

March 3, 2010, GBBCC met with Baltimore Grand Prix inaugural race to discuss minority participation in contract negotiation. From this interaction two companies that were members of the GBBCC received contracts in the first year.

May 12, 2012, the GBBCC joined the US Black Chamber of Commerce and was featured on the front of the US Chamber site for three months.

July 16, 2012, the GBBCC President Lance Lucas attended the US Black Chamber of Commerce School of Business. The school concluded with a trip to the White House for a briefing and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between SBA and the US Black Chamber of Commerce for resource help and funding opportunities for all two hundred Chambers of Commerce across the US.

During the 2012 Baltimore City Council Session, the council reenacted the City of Baltimore's Minority Business Enterprise Program. They provided for the City's certification agency, the Mayor's Minority

Business Office, to commission a study of the City's MBE Program to ensure compliance with constitutional mandates and programmatic best practices. With help of then Delegate Barbara Robinson, GBBCC, Lance Lucas, GBBCC president, the Keller Professional Services a GBBCC member company, assisted with the facilitation of the study and provided professional support to ensure the study was conducted in an effective manner.

Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013 was passed for the purpose of altering the Maryland renewable energy portfolio standard program to include a certain amount of energy derived from offshore wind energy; prohibiting the portion of the renewable energy portfolio standard that represents offshore wind energy from applying to certain sales. The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce supported legislation to use MBE goals on all levels of Wind energy program.

GBBCC Chairwoman Delegate Robinson sponsored House Bill 1053 Video Lottery Facilities – Employee Licenses – Crimes of Moral Turpitude or Gambling for the purpose of limiting the requirement that the State Lottery Commission deny a video lottery employee license to an applicant convicted for a crime involving moral turpitude or gambling to those applicants convicted, paroled, or on probation for the crime within a certain prior period; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to video lottery employee licenses. Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake requested this legislation, and it allowed individuals who had not committed an act of criminal activity that involved moral turpitude within the past six years to be eligible for employment in the casino industry.

In 2013 the senate issued legislation reauthorizing State Government - Brokerage and Investment Management Services- Use of Minority Business Enterprises that required the State Treasurer, the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund, the Injured Workers' Insurance Fund, and the State Retirement and Pension System to use minority

business enterprises (MBE) to the greatest extent feasible to provide brokerage and investment management services. GBBCC supported this legislation to ensure the four entities' use of MBEs were consistent with MBE purchasing standards in current law and with their respective fiduciary responsibilities.

November 2013 members of the GBBCC formed the State of Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce and were honored in Annapolis by the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland for their efforts. The GBBCC joined other Black Chambers throughout Maryland to form the organization called the State of Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce, (SOMBCOC).

February 2014, Lance Lucas, Delegate Barbara Robinson, Security Zenita Hurley, Special Secretary of the Governor's Office on Minority Affairs, and representatives from Motorola met to discuss opportunities for minorities to work on Motorola contracts at the BWI Airport.

5. Highlight the core values or guiding principles that have shaped the culture and operations of GBBCC over the years.

During the 2006 session of the Maryland General Assembly, Senate Bill 884 and House Bill 869 reenacted the State of Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise Program for five years, until July 1, 2011. These two bills also provided for the State's certification agency, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), to commission a study of the MBE program to ensure compliance with constitutional mandates and programmatic best practices. Maryland's MBE program dates back to 1978 and is considered the oldest in the country.

Maryland also has the nation's most aggressive MBE/WBE/DBE goal. The 600-page, state-commissioned disparity study on state

procurements was released in mid-February 2011. The study conducted by NERA Economic Consulting, found “substantial evidence” of disparity in state contracting and procurements even with the MBE program.

House Bill 1370 Procurement - Minority Business Participation (Effective July 1, 2012) extended the MBE program until 2016 and added several provisions to further strengthen the effectiveness of the program to provide equal access to opportunities and address longstanding and persistent disparities. The companion bill HB1369 provided provisions for training and other services to strengthen Maryland’s MBE program. Delegate Robinson was a stakeholder representing LITSOM and GBBCC and based on the results and findings of the disparity study, collaborated with the Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) and MDOT to develop language for the bills.

Delegate Robinson sponsored House Bill 48/Senate Bill 1066 - Minority Business Enterprises - Not-for-Profit Entities to exclude 501(c)3 non-profit organizations from being counted as part of the State’s MBE program. This bill allowed more than \$800 million dollars to be allocated to minority businesses. For more than eight years non-profit organizations were counted as minority businesses which made the reports on the amount of funding given to minority businesses incorrect. With the support of GBBCC, Delegate Robinson was able to help the legislation successfully pass.

6. How has the GBBCC evolved and grown since its founding and what factors have contributed to its growth and impact in the Baltimore community?

The chamber influences the governor’s office of operation to the extent that GBBCC’s legislation changed the name of the Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) to the Governor’s Office of Small,

Minority and Women Business Affairs (GOSMWBA) pronounced (GOZBA). The name change was brought on by legislation HB700 introduced by GBBCC board member Senator Robinson and was passed during the 2017 session of the Maryland General Assembly.

This legislation clarified the office's focus of working exclusively with small businesses and helps connect these businesses to a broad spectrum of programs and resources. "Maryland's diverse small businesses play a critical role in creating jobs, and growing our state's economy and we remain committed to creating a culture that is business-friendly and focused on expanding opportunity for all Marylanders," said former Maryland governor Larry Hogan.

Maryland's 580,000 small businesses account for 50 percent of our jobs statewide. The vast majority are micro businesses and more than 70 percent are owned by minorities and women. This unique demographic means that what is good for small business is inherently good for minority-and women-owned businesses as well.

"Adding the word "Business' is significant," said Jimmy Rhee who was special secretary with GOMA at that time. "We continue to have oversight for the Small Business Reserve (SBR) and Minority Business Enterprise procurement programs, while expanding our efforts to include all small businesses. We will serve as an information hub that connects them to resources focused on building core competency, accessing capital, and developing an insightful understanding of the policies that impact their competitive space. These are the three pillars of success that every small business must master to compete with confidence in both the public and private sectors," said Secretary Rhee.

7. Have there been any pivotal events or turning points in GBBCC's history that have significantly shaped its trajectory?

GBBCC also supports legislation to convert the PC16 into regulation. PC16 began as a public conference, initiated by the Public Service Commission (PSC) in 2008, for the purpose of ensuring that women, minority, and service-disabled veteran-owned businesses and not-for-profit organizations have fair opportunities to participate in and compete for contracts and subcontracts with public utility companies.

Beginning in February 2009, the Commission entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with 18 Maryland utility companies in which the signing companies committed to use their best efforts to achieve a goal of awarding 25 percent of their total dollars spent on contracts, subcontracts, and purchase orders (governed by the MOU) to diverse suppliers. The companies also agreed to file annual plans detailing their efforts to achieve the goal and reports documenting their progress.

GBBCC also supported legislation that reduces the amount of personal property taxes levied against small businesses with assets less than \$50,000. It further supported legislation that offers tax waivers for small businesses in certain situations.

GBBCC not only supports legislation directed to businesses, but the Chamber is also concerned with reducing the recidivism rate of ex-offenders, such as passing House Bill 1053 which expands employment opportunities for ex-offenders. The bill limited the requirement that the State Lottery Commission could deny a video lottery employee license to an applicant who was convicted for a crime involving moral turpitude or gambling. It allows individuals who have not committed an act of criminal activity that involves moral turpitude within the past six years to be eligible for employment in the casino industry. The GBBCC focuses on legislation that enhances the quality of life for all with a concentration on African Americans.

January 19, 2012, more than 350 minority businesses, women owned businesses and minority business leaders came together for the first MBE-WBE-DBE Legislative Summit in Annapolis. The catered

event was held from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Lowe House Office Building. It was hosted by Delegate Barbara Robinson and was open to the public.

Elected officials, the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA), and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), were there to address the attendees. The well-attended event was sponsored by Verizon, GBBCC, LITSOM, the Southern Maryland Minority Business Coalition, Digital All Systems, Inc. GBBCC, and STAR Associates, Inc.

8. Have there been any significant shifts in GBBCC's mission or focus throughout its history, and if so, what prompted those changes?

There has not been a shift in GBBCC's mission or focus as there has been an increase in the Chamber's focus as the business needs of minority businesses and women-owned and operated businesses change. I would like to see follow up on legislation that did sunset but need to be resurrected because of the needs of Baltimore City residents and visitors, such legislation include the following: **Department of Health and Mental Hygiene — Health Care Facilities Abuser Registry:**

For more than twenty years Senator Robinson was aware of the need for an abuser registry designed to identify individuals who abuse vulnerable populations of people, who cannot protect themselves. It is the intent of such a registry to identify abusers before they are hired.

Senator Robinson brought the opposing stakeholders together to form a study group of nine agency representatives to ensure that a final product would provide a registry of people who have been convicted of abusing and neglecting a patient/client in a health care facility.

Such facilities include home care, assisted living facilities, independent living facilities, group homes, alternative living unities, nursing homes, and community-based residential facilities. The registry will be maintained by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH. This registry is an attempt to prevent the abuser from going from agency to agency abusing the most vulnerable population of people who cannot protect themselves. The title of the bill was changed to: “The Department of Health Care Facilities Abuser Registry Task Force.”

9. Share any noteworthy partnerships, collaborations, or initiatives that GBBCC has engaged in to support its members and promote economic growth.

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LITSOM had the largest minority and women owned business representation in Annapolis, with over 350 MBE/WBE/DBEs. Other legislation in which the GBBCC is interested is unemployment insurance to re-examine how the percentage to assess unemployment insurance payments for small businesses is calculated. GBBCC also supported a bill to require the Minority Business Enterprise Program to form a task force to determine how former subcontractors can transition to prime contractors.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE GREATER BALTIMORE BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

The purpose of the GBBCC the COB Collaboration.

- * facilitate exchanges of information between the business and academic communities for the benefit of students, faculty, the Chamber, and its members, entrepreneurs, and the corporate community.
- * Assist in developing a pathway for **CSU COB** students to professional and business success for the next generation of business leaders.
- * Develop student intern and externship opportunities with the goal of Providing **CSU COB** student with practical and relevant experiences and **GBBCC** members with faculty and student contributions.
- * Increase access for **CSU COB** faculty to research fields for academics to develop innovative approaches to business and entrepreneurship.
- * Develop space where students, faculty, and business can meet, confer and work on projects.
- * Build models of sustainability and best practices for partnerships between **CSU COB** and corporate communities.
- * Create a Junior Student Chapter of the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce where **CSU COB** students would participate in and contribute to the monthly general membership meetings of the **GBBCC**.
- * Invite Student Association Presidents and Officers to attend Board meetings to provide opportunity for **CSU** students to observe how a board governs its business.
- * Host an annual educational event for **CSU COB** students.

10. What is the long-term vision and goals of GBBCC for the future, and how do you plan to continue serving and empowering the Black business community in the Baltimore area?

Baltimore is referred to as a City of Crisis. The school-to-prison pipeline is contributing to young black males being sent to jail 3.5 times more than their white peers for committing the same infractions or behaviors. I would like to see legislation that was introduced as study groups to determine if certain legislation is needed be passed when the group determines that certain policies are indeed needed. Such as the following HB1287 that was passed in preparing young leaders to take their place in the IT industry, Barbara, in collaboration with Digital Systems and Northrop Grumman, launched a cyber security program at Morgan State University and Coppin State University; a Conscious Venture lab at the Baltimore City Community College which is a small business incubator project.

Barbara engaged U.S. Congresswoman Maxine Waters from California, and Congressman Elijah Cummings from Maryland to expand the opportunities for and decreasing the obstacles of minority franchisees in the United States in 2017.

I would like to see the GBCC spearhead a study to determine if there is disparity treatment of private Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) providers under the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH). The study would bring transparency to the way state funds are allocated and will determine:

- How many MBEs, WBEs and DBEs are the recipients of state contracts?
- The rate at which licenses of community-based residential facilities are revoked and the reasons for the revocations.
- The length of time state employees who are in positions to determine the allocation of state funding leave the state position to work at an agency that was the recipient of funding under their direction.
- If there is disparity treatment by surveyors from OHCQ when interpreting and applying COMAR regulations during routine monitoring of community-based facilities.
- Is adequate training provided to health care providers and what type of training is provided and how and where are the trainers trained?

- The methods by which patient/client/consumer/individual abuse and neglect are investigated and reported.
- Methods taken to decrease abuse and stop the abusers from working in places with vulnerable populations of people.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE GREATER BALTIMORE BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (GBBCC), AND THE STATE OF MARYLAND BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (SOMBCOC)

1. December 18, 2011, Delegate Barbara A. Robinson, GBBCC Board Chair, and Lance Lucas, GBBCC President, coordinated the meeting between the following organizations: the NAACP, the Baltimore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the GBBCC, and Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings Blake and her administrative team and department heads to address MBE/WBE/DBE economic development issues and methods of improving the relationship and methods of doing business with the City of Baltimore.
2. January 15, 2010, the GBBCC was one of the founding groups of the Legislation in the State of Maryland Coalition, (L.I.T.S.O.M). LITSOM is the brainchild of the late Raymond V. Haysbert, Sr. and Chairwoman Emeritus Delegate Barbara A. Robinson. LITSOM was formed to represent in Annapolis all minority business enterprises and women-owned business enterprises in the State of Maryland, and to support, oppose, suggest, and/or introduce legislation that affect their business success. LITSOM currently has the largest minority and women owned business representation in Annapolis, with over 350 MBE/WBE/DBE represented and in attendance on January 15, 2013.

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4. May 12, 2012, the GBBCC joined the US Black Chamber of Commerce and was featured on the front of the US Chamber site for three months.
5. July 16, 2012, the GBBCC President Lance Lucas attended the US Black Chamber of Commerce School of Business. The school concluded with a trip to the White House for a briefing and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between SBA and the US Black Chamber of Commerce for resource help and funding opportunities for all 200 Chambers of Commerce across the US.
6. During the 2006 session of the Maryland General Assembly, Senate Bill 884 and House Bill 869 reenacted the State of Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise Program for five years, until July 1, 2011. These two bills also provided for the State's certification agency, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), to commission a study of the MBE Program to ensure compliance with constitutional mandates and programmatic best practices. Digit All Systems GBBCC member company help facilitate the study at their location and provided technical support to ensure the study was conducted in an effective manner.
7. During the 2012 Baltimore City Council Session, the council reenacted the City of Baltimore's Minority Business Enterprise Program. They provided for the City's certification agency, the Mayor's Minority Business Office, to commission a study of the City's MBE Program to ensure compliance with constitutional mandates and programmatic best practices. With help of the GBBCC the Keller Professional Services, a GBBCC member company assisted with the facilitation of the study and provided professional support to ensure the study was conducted in an effective manner.
8. House Bill 1370 Procurement - Minority Business Participation (Effective July 1, 2012) extends the MBE program until 2016 and adds several provisions to further strengthen the effectiveness of the program in an effort to provide equal access to opportunities and address longstanding and persistent disparities. The companion bill HB1369 provided provisions for training and other services to strengthen Maryland's MBE Program. GBBCC Chairwoman Delegate Barbara A. Robinson was a stakeholder representing LITSOM and GBBCC and based on the results and findings of the disparity study, worked with the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA) and MDOT to develop language for the bills.
9. GBBCC Chairwoman Delegate Robinson sponsored House Bill 48 / Senate Bill 1066 - Minority Business Enterprises - Not-for-Profit Entities - Excludes non-profits organized to promote the interests of physically or mentally disabled individuals from being counted as part of the State MBE program effective as of July 1, 2015. The legislation allows for continuation of existing contracts through the end of the contract, prohibits certain contracts from being counted as part of a unit of State government's total procurement contracting for the purposes of the MBE, requires MDOT to evaluate and report on the impact of removing nonprofit entities from

the Minority Business Enterprise Program in December of 2015 and 2016 and calls for data collection and reporting on an annual basis by the Department of General Services to the Board of Public Works and General Assembly. For more than eight years non-profit organizations were counted as minority businesses when the Governor reports on the amount of funding given to minority businesses which made the numbers incorrect. Because Delegate Robinson had the support of LITSOM and the GBBCC as her support, she was able to help the legislation successfully pass.

10. Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013 was passed for the purpose of altering the Maryland renewable energy portfolio standard program to include a certain amount of energy derived from offshore wind energy; prohibiting the portion of the renewable energy portfolio standard that represents offshore wind energy from applying to certain sales. The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce supported legislation to use MBE goals on all levels of Wind energy program.

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12. SB606 2013 reauthorization State Government - Brokerage and Investment Management Services- Use of Minority Business Enterprises This bill requires the State Treasurer, the Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund, the Injured Workers' Insurance Fund, and the State Retirement and Pension System to attempt to use minority business enterprises (MBE) to the greatest extent feasible to provide brokerage and investment management services. The four entities' use of MBEs must be consistent with MBE purchasing standards in current law and with their respective fiduciary responsibilities

13. November 2013 members of the GBBCC formed the State of Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce and were honored in Annapolis by the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland for their efforts.

14. February 2014, Lance Lucas, Delegate Barbara Robinson, Security Zenita Hurley, Special Secretary of the Governor's Office on Minority Affairs, and representatives from Motorola met to discuss opportunities for minorities to work on Motorola contracts at the BWI Airport

LITSOM

(Legislation In the State of Maryland)

On January 16, 2014, from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in room 180 of the Lowe House Office Building in Annapolis, Maryland, the fourth MBE-WBE-DBE Legislative Night in Annapolis was scheduled. This informative, catered event was free to the public with refreshments provided by Agape Caterers and sponsored by Verizon. However, seating was limited; therefore, individuals were encouraged to arrive early.

Candidates for Governor were invited to attend to share with the more than 300 businesses and community leaders their views on minority and women-owned business issues, on economic development, and wealth increase. The attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and make recommendations. The evening's agenda also included presentations from the following individuals/agencies:

- * The Governor's Office of Minority Affairs (GOMA)
- * The Mayor's Office of Minority and Women-Owned Business Development
- * The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)
- * The State of Maryland Black Chamber of Commerce (SOMBCOC)
- * The Legislative Black Caucus (LBC)
- * Cambridge, Maryland Minority Business Leaders
- * Delegates and Senators with bills that impact minority and women-owned businesses
- * The Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Community leaders were recognized for their accomplishments in the community and in their efforts to improve the economic and business development of the State of Maryland. Individuals who were recognized are the following:

- Tessa Hill, President of the NAACP Maryland Chapter
- Abby Harper, GOMA
- Zenita Hurley, Special Secretary of GOMA
- Omar Muhammad, Morgan State University
- Doni Glover, B'More News

In 2008 the late Raymond (Ray) Haysbert and Delegate Barbara A. Robinson collaborated with other community organizations to bring together Maryland's minority businesses and women-owned and operated businesses by creating an organization called LITSOM. The word LITSOM stands for Legislation in the State of Maryland. Delegate Robinson and Mr. Haysbert recognized that all minority business enterprises and women-owned businesses, regardless of their ethnicity, shared similar concerns about business success. Legislation passed in Annapolis that affect minority and women-owned businesses affect minorities of all ethnic origins.

It was their contention that if minority and women-owned business enterprises joined efforts and combined their voices they could pose a powerful force with which to be recognized. Every business owner in Maryland is a constituent of an elected official regardless of where they live. Therefore, they should hold their representatives accountable for representing their interests in Annapolis.

In January 2011, LITSOM, the Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce, the Southern Maryland Tri-Counties Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor of Cambridge Maryland, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Korean Businesses, the National Organization Women, the NAACP, and other organizations, hosted the first MBE-WBE-DBE Legislative Night in Annapolis. More than 100 people attended this event that was sponsored by Verizon. The following year the number of attendees increased. In January 2013, more than 350 business and community leaders attended the informative event. The 2014 MBE-WBE-DBE Legislative Night in Annapolis is expected to attract a larger crowd. You are encouraged to attend and let your voice be heard.

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING THE LITSOM COALITION

1. GOMA (the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs)
2. NAACP
3. MDOT (the Maryland Department of Transportation)
4. MSBDFEA (Maryland Small Business Development and Financing Administration)
5. DBED (Department of Business and Economic Development)
6. SBDC (the Small Business Development Center)
7. The Baltimore Urban League
8. The Mayor's Office of Minority Business
9. Minority Supplier Development Council
10. Maryland Washington Minority Contractors' Association, Inc.
11. The Southern Maryland Consortium of African American Community Organizations

12. The Southern Maryland Coalition
13. Minority Women Business Owners Association
14. NAWBO (National Association of Women Business Owners)
15. The Baltimore Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
16. The Maryland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
17. The Greater Baltimore Black Chamber of Commerce
18. The Hagerstown Chamber of Commerce
19. Coppin State University
20. The Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce
21. The Prince Georges County Chamber of Commerce
22. The Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce
23. The Black Chamber of Commerce of Anne Arundel County
24. Verizon
25. WomanScope Magazine
26. Sisters4Sisters Network, Incorporated
27. The Howard County Chamber of Commerce
28. The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

LITSOM’S MISSION STATEMENT

To advocate, educate and inform minority business enterprises, women-owned businesses, and disadvantage business enterprises (MBE-WBE-DBE), about the role and responsibilities of their Maryland State Legislators as they relate to business issues, policies, regulations, growth and development.

GOALS

To **advocate**, communicate and support bills (legislation) that are in the best interest of MBE=s-WBE=s-DBE=s.

To **conduct** educational forums and roundtable discussions with State Legislators on topics of interest to MBE=s-WBE=s-DBE=s.

To **inquire** about the status of bills in the House and Senate on behalf of MBE=s-WBE=s-DBE=s.

To **provide** pertinent information to State Legislators that support MBE=s-WBE=s-DBE=s positions on bills and policies that come before a Committee.

To **testify** in support or against