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Montgomery County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly  
Priorities Hearing  
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Thanks to so many of you who joined us last week at the Business Awards Dinner.

On our website you can watch the compelling videos and be inspired by the incredible diversity of our business leaders and the great work they are doing to:

- Develop cutting edge technologies, like small businesses Xometry, Right Eye, and RoboTeam;
- Invest in our community, like DSFederal, Kaiser Permanente, and Fitzgerald Auto; and,
- Grow the next generation of talent, like GEICO, and DMI;
- ALL as proud Montgomery County, Maryland employers.

There was ONE, main theme: **Talent** is the key ingredient to their success. This was evident as each award winner spent time thanking their team members. It is not a surprise: Talent is the raw material of our 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy. Attracting and retaining top talent is now the #1 issue keeping every employer up at night.

Therefore, it is an economic imperative that Maryland is the #1 choice for employees and the people who employ them today and into the future.

Over the years, business and government working together have accomplished great things together! If I had more than three minutes, I would thank each of you individually!

Recent highlights where we have collaborated to benefit Maryland include:

- The National Center Veteran Institute for Procurement (VIP): Thank you all, especially Senator Nancy King who testified in person in support of continued annual state funding of \$150,000! We have graduated over 323 Veteran -owned small Maryland businesses that have grown an average of 54% one year after graduation, creating more jobs for more Marylanders.

REQUEST: FY 2018 - We ask for your help again to support **\$150,000** for VIP to train even more Maryland Veteran-owned small businesses.

- State Procurement Opportunities for Veteran-owned small businesses: Thank you, Delegate Kirill Reznik, for working with the state to remove the obstacles for veteran-owned small businesses to participate in state procurement. This was a huge step toward making Maryland the #1 state in in the country for Veterans!

REQUEST: FY 2018 - We need more initiatives and investments to ensure that Maryland has 21<sup>st</sup> century talent and employers. We urge you focus on the investments to make that happen:

- **Mobility/Transportation/ Technology:** Our transportation priorities continue to be roads and transit, as well as the emerging technologies needed to advance both:
  - Metro/Wmata, Purple Line, CCT, I-270, and other related road improvements
  - Adopt technologies that enhance delivery of both transit and road mobility

Investment in mobility increases economic activity and access to opportunity.

Without it, we are literally and figuratively stuck. Let's get moving on all kinds of mobility.

- **Talent/Training/Education:**
  - Facilities and programs: Montgomery College, and Universities @ Shady Grove, and MCPS, all must stay on track to deliver STEM and other programs and support for the jobs of the future
  - Talent: Support Businesses who train/retrain employees: There is a gap that must be addressed. There are thousands of unfilled jobs in Maryland and thousands of under employed or not employed young and new residents who do not have the skills necessary for these jobs. Solutions include:

Provide/expand tax credits for employers to identify and train this under-utilized talent pool

- **Marketplace:**
  - Priority: A consistent definition of size standard for 'small business', throughout the state, across government departments, and in various pieces of legislation.
  - Technical assistance to help small businesses put compliance systems and best practices into place to remain relevant in a competitive marketplace

These are investments you can make in this upcoming legislative session that will position Montgomery County employers and Maryland for success in the future.

We offer our help to bring clarity and certainty to those businesses who are trying to grow, provide jobs to our residents, but need support in navigating the choppy waters of compliance. We and they rely on you - our voice in Annapolis - to expedite both mobility and access to trained talent to create more opportunity.

As Norm Augustine said, "you can't be for jobs and against employers." And as many of you who were with us on Thursday experienced, Montgomery County employers invest in their people. That is what makes this community great.

With your continued collaboration, we can support the success of Maryland employers and their talent.

Thank you.