
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

*GOVERNOR'S RECEPTION ROOM, SECOND FLOOR, STATE HOUSE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND*

**August 27, 2025
10:07 a.m.**

PRESENT

HONORABLE WES MOORE

Governor

HONORABLE BROOKE E. LIERMAN

Comptroller

HONORABLE JONATHAN D. MARTIN

Chief Deputy Treasurer

JOHN GONTRUM

Secretary, Board of Public Works

ATIF CHAUDHRY

Secretary, Department of General Services

JAKE DAY

Secretary, Department of Housing and Community Development

KATIE SAVAGE

Secretary, Department of Information Technology

EMILY WILSON

Director of Legislative and Constituent Services,
Department of Natural Resources

THOMAS HICKEY

Director of Procurement and Real Property Initiatives,
University System of Maryland

VALERIE RADOMSKY

Chief Procurement Officer, Department of Transportation

LISA GRIGSBY

Recording Secretary, Board of Public Works

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PROCEEDINGS

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good morning, everybody.

(Chorus of Good Morning.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: And welcome to today's edition of the Board of Public Works. At the last meeting, Treasurer Davis shared with us that he was going to be missing a few meetings as he recovers from a medical procedure. And so while we are honored and excited to have Deputy Treasurer Martin here joining us -- and thank you again, Mr. Treasurer, I know you are watching. We just want to say hello, and to say that we all wish you a very, very speedy recovery, my friend.

And with that, Mr. Secretary. Good morning, good to see you. And we'll go on with the business of the day.

MR. GONTRUM: Good morning Governor.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Mr. Treasurer, I hope you are not watching.

(Laughter.)

MR. GONTRUM: Good morning to you, Madam Comptroller and Mr. Deputy Treasurer. There are 13 items on the Secretary's Agenda this morning. I'm happy to assist with answering any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Mr. Secretary.

I'd like to start by highlighting Item 8, which is a request from the Department of Housing and Community Development to award over \$24 million in Fiscal Year 2026 grant awards to support capital improvements across 25 select projects that we have going on all across the State. That's truly going to focus on expanding affordable housing, expand on generating business activity, expand on

community revitalization efforts, and making sure that we're doing all of these things quickly and in the kind of urgency that we think that the demand requires and requests.

With the support from the General Assembly, these individual awards are going to be more than just investments in housing and more than investments in innovation -- but they really are strategic commitments. And they're strategic commitments that we feel are important to not just the anchor institutions that drive our economic growth, but real commitments that are important to the people of our state. And they will be funded through three of the Department's pivotal economic development funds.

For more about these incredibly exciting initiatives, I also want to bring up a person who, without his leadership, they would not be possible, which is our DHCD Secretary Jake Day. Secretary Day, good morning and it's good to see you.

MR. DAY: Good morning, sir.

Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Chief Deputy Treasurer. Good to be with you. For the record, my name is Jake Day, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. And we come before you this morning to ask for approval for \$24 million in funding for 25 revitalization projects.

Funding will come from three of the Department's seven revitalization programs that the Governor mentioned. \$7.85 million will be from the Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative, or BRNI as it's colloquially known, which supports projects located in sustainable community areas in Baltimore City and the inner beltway areas in Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties.

\$9.4 million will come from the National Capital Strategic

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Economic Development Fund, or NED -- BRNI's cousin -- to support projects in sustainable communities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. And \$7 million for the SEED Community Development Anchor Institution Fund, or simply SEED. We couldn't find an appropriate name moniker there. Which funds large-scale transformative projects envisioned by community anchor institutions, partners, and stakeholders.

The 25 projects will advance several key goals for the Moore-Miller Administration and for our Department. First, SEED funds will support the Governor's goal of making Maryland the hub for leading edge technology and innovation.

Second, BRNI supports the Governor's Reinvest Baltimore initiative. This is an ambitious and ongoing partnership between the City and the State to move 5,000 vacant units to home ownership or other positive outcomes in five years. Several proposed BRNI projects will do just that. Bringing homeownership opportunities, small business development, and critical community assets to disinvested communities.

And third, NED funds will support the creation of housing opportunities, homeownership and rental, and other business and community redevelopment particularly along the Purple Line. So we're very excited about that. That will help on and spur innovation, economic growth, and attract talented workers to Maryland and build affordable, thriving communities for them to live in and keep them in.

This Administration and the Agency embraced the power of placemaking. We're committed to making these places great. We're going to help our partners -- partners like the ones that have been involved in these 25 projects before you. We're also going to help them build places and create spaces that are not just livable, but lovable, embraced and supported by their community and

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residents. We believe that great places win in a competitive economy, so we need to build more housing that's affordable to attract and retain the skilled workforce we need for Maryland's future.

Thank you for your time. I'll hand things back to you, Governor.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much, Mr. Secretary. And great, great work on this.

I also understand that we have a few of our awardees who have joined us this morning and talk a little bit about not just the exciting work, but also an opportunity for us to just say thank you to them for their leadership. And in the interest of time, I would ask the speakers to keep their comments to three minutes.

Secretary Gontrum, if you could help to make sure that that is the case. Where included in Item 8 is \$3 million to BRNI funding to ReBuild Metro to support their Machine Works project, which is going to transform the old Detrick & Harvey Machine Company factory in Baltimore into a 44,000 square foot innovation center for advanced manufacturing and for biotech research.

Another \$1.5 million from BRNI in funding will go toward the ReBuild Metro's Homeownership Initiative, which is revitalizing vacant homes in East Baltimore and provides financial support to those residents. And I would like to ask Sean Closkey, the president of ReBuild Metro, to tell us about these projects. And also, once again, with a deep degree of thanks that we (indiscernible). Thanks.

MR. CLOSKEY: Governor, thank you very much. Madam Comptroller, thank you for having me here. I'm the president of ReBuild Metro. My name is Sean Closkey. And the two BRNI grants that we have before the Board today are really central to the long-term partnership that we've had with the State. We are working in East Baltimore, an area that was once hobbled by 1,300

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abandoned properties. We've reduced 90 percent of those. The properties are no longer vacant.

Using these funds, we will be moving in partnership with your Reinvest Baltimore Program. And we believe within the next four years, we will have zero vacancy in that quarter. That means you will be able to walk from Penn Station to John Hopkins without seeing a vacant house, a mile and a half walk. I did it yesterday. This is really important stuff, and we really applaud you for your leadership on this.

The idea is to move at scale. And if you understand what we're saying by scale, under this Administration over the last 30 months, we've taken out 325 abandoned properties to make this possible. And at 508 East Preston, we are talking about what was the major thorn in the community's side. A hulking almost 50,000 square foot warehouse, open air drug market, it was the problem. Nobody could resolve it.

And it is in our partnership with the community and the City, and Regina Hammond, who is the leader of the community who will be up in just a minute to tell you about this, that fight is won. Right? We are now going to make that which was an eyesore part of advanced manufacturing for the state of Maryland. We're going to -- we're bringing jobs back to Johnston Square. We're bringing jobs to Maryland and they're state-of-the-art jobs. This is nanotechnology that we're bringing in the City.

In addition, we believe in Johnston Square in a both-end approach. It's not doing the big projects that we all take pictures at. It's all the houses that are abandoned that are living right next to our neighbors. Those houses are killing our neighbors. If we can use the same money, the same resources, and the same ingenuity to rehab those houses so that we're bringing new families into Johnston Square, we create healthy neighborhoods. And I think that really this

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both-end approach is the approach for the reinvest program.

And, gain, we've cut 90 percent of the vacancy. We've increased homeownership values 14 times. We have been able to do all of this without displacing families. And we've increased the tax base by over 100 percent. All of this is only possible because we walk with Regina Hammond and the community.

And I guess you'll introduce her, but everyone's going to want to listen to her.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I can't do it better than you just did.

(Laughter.)

MR. CLOSKEY: Thank you, all.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Let's go. I love it, here we go. Strategy, speed, and scale -- that's what I'm talking about.

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: And with no further ado, Regina Hammond, the Executive Director of the Rebuild Johnston Square Neighborhood Association. Ms. Hammond, it is wonderful, wonderful, wonderful to see you.

MS. HAMMOND: I am so excited to be here, just share with you all the wonderful things that have been going on in the neighborhood, like Johnston Square. And we have Johnston Squares all over Baltimore. But I'm going to tell you, I was a 40-year resident of Johnston Square and nothing was going on there. They had forgotten about us.

But thanks to this program, we were able to devote legacy funding to people who had stayed in the community, stuck it out through the good times and the bad times. We were able to give them new roofs and new kitchens and just new everything because they didn't have any equity because of all the vacants around them. So thank you, thank you for that.

But in addition to that, me and my neighbors who have also lived

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there a mighty long time, we pulled together and all those vacant lots and those houses that had fallen down or got demolished, we created beautiful gardens throughout the neighborhood. We have the Johnston Square Art and Garden Walk in Johnston Square. Come see us, it's beautiful in the spring. But in addition to that, the gardens, we have 14, but we have a team of youth and adults that maintain 30 lots in Johnston Square. Again, thank you for that.

And then in addition to that, we have a magnificent football team at Saint Frances that didn't even have a field to play on. But now we'll be able to create a field for them and a community space for people in the neighborhood.

And lastly, we're going to be able to -- we are attracting a Enoch Pratt Library to Johnston Square. With all the resources that a Enoch Pratt Library can bring to a community that has been so disinvested for decades, it's so exciting to see what we've been able to do.

And by the way, Governor Moore, November 10th, we're going to celebrate the opening of a 109-unit apartment building with the library in the basement. We sure hope you'll come join us on that date.

(Laughter.)

MS. HAMMOND: So with that being said --

GOVERNOR MOORE: My team heard that loud and clear.

(Laughter.)

MS. HAMMOND: These projects just show what's possible when government and community join hands and walk together, so thank you.

(Applause.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Amen, we're ready.

And also included in this item is \$2 million in SEED funding to the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore to support the build out of the Strategic Operations Center in Baltimore City. And this project has literally been on our

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radar since day one. In fact, before day one.

MS. HAMMOND: Yes.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Before the transition, before we took office. Because this was really an idea, a brainchild of person who we're about to introduce up. About the idea about how do we think holistically, about what does it mean to have community build out, safer streets, vibrant economic communities. That this strategic operations center is really going to be utilizing cutting edge technology and making sure that we're all working together.

That we're uniting law enforcement, that we're uniting emergency management, and we're uniting hospitality. That we're uniting community groups and social service providers in a way to not just make sure that downtown Baltimore is safe, but also make sure that it thrives. And you know, I want to paraphrase the person who I'm about to introduce up here when I say that this is -- for this to be Maryland's decade, it's got to be Baltimore's time. And for it to be Baltimore's time, it's got to be Downtown's moment. So I'd like to introduce and bring up my dear friend, Shelonda Stokes.

MS. STOKES: Thank you so much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Who's the president of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore.

MS. STOKES: Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. This is an amazing opportunity for us. Good morning, Governor Moore.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good Morning.

MS. STOKES: Madam Comptroller, good to see you again.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes.

MS. STOKES: Yesterday --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, ma'am.

MS. STOKES: -- and Chief Deputy Martin, definitely nice to see

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you.

I'm Shelonda Stokes, for those who don't know. Thank you for the introduction. The president, the proud president, of Downtown Partnership of Baltimore. And on behalf of our organization -- and I have my Chief Operating Officer here, Maria Martins-Evora, our board, our partners, and our partner in the work, the University of Maryland, Baltimore, we thank you for the consistent support and for the shared commitment to Baltimore's future.

Our organization, if you don't know, is responsible for championing a clean, safe, and thriving urban core. That while we enhance that, we also want to make sure that we are drawing attention and making all of our downtown neighborhoods a place that people want to live, work, invest, and play. That's why the approval of two million for SEED funding is so important to our new strategic operations center. We call it a SOC. And so we'll have a pilot coming, we call it the mock SOC. But for the SOC, it will serve, as you mentioned, a centralized hub for coordinated response to public safety, quality of life concerns, and emergencies.

By leveraging advanced technology, all of what's a part of the mission here and real time data analysis, the SOC brings together the State, the City, and private partners to comprehensively address issues, deploying the right resource for the right situation in that time, so that we are looking to stop things in real time and so that they don't get larger.

A major part of our success is the collaboration of the SOC. It's partnering with law enforcement. I thank you -- I saw Secretary Chaudhry in here, I know the Maryland State Capitol Police are a part of that. I thank Secretary Day for the partnership and really helping make sure that we do this. But we're looking at not only security and law enforcement, but how we work with BPW to improve cleanliness with this technology.

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Working with the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, as we support vulnerable neighbors with this technology and DOT walkability -- all of the partners, that's what this is about because we know that together we can strengthen public confidence, we can foster a welcoming environment, create conditions to sustain growth. And technology allows us to do that with collaboration.

So Governor, you said it in the beginning, I always included in the speeches, Maryland's decade/ Baltimore's time. It is Downtown's moment. And we know that safety is a core component of that and look forward to and are thankful for the partnership. So we're proud to move forward with this, our entire team on this, what we're calling the second renaissance of our city. This is a part and it's supported by the Mayor and his Downtown Rise initiative, so this is a part of what we're looking as the next generation of how we will pilot in downtown, what we look forward to expanding throughout our state altogether. So thank you, thank you, thank you for the opportunity, the partnership, and most importantly the dollars.

(Laughter.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much.

MS. STOKES: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Bless you.

MS. STOKES: Thank you, thank you, thank you.

(Applause.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Ms. Stokes, Ms. Hammond, and Mr. Closkey, we just want to say thank you. Not just for being here, but also thank you for believing in Baltimore. Thank you for believing in our state's largest city. Thank you for believing in the people who call Baltimore home.

You know, there are a lot of people right now who have Baltimore

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on their minds. There's a lot of people right now who are trying to downplay and disrespect Baltimore for their own political gain because they'd rather talk about Baltimore than actually do anything to support Baltimore. That they like talking about Baltimore because they like going into these 1980's tropes because they think it benefits them politically outside. But here's the reality, is that this is a remarkably vibrant and powerful city with remarkably vibrant people.

And I respect people who are willing to actually get into the work and lift up communities instead of people who use high perches to look down on them. And so I'm thankful for all the work that you all are doing to making sure that everybody is lifted up and that for this, for this really to us, a truly honor leaving no one behind, it means actually leaving no one behind. So bless you guys and thank you so much for your work.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Mr. Governor, can I just --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Please, please.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- add? I think, you know, as I was hearing -- you know, reading through the investments earlier this week and hearing Ms. Hammond, from you, and Sean, and Shelonda, you know, it occurs to me, of course, that these are the kinds of investments that build safer cities, right? This is what it takes. And in fact, the origin of BRNI was that it became, Speaker Busch championed this project after the unrest in Baltimore after the death of Freddie Gray.

SEED and NED soon followed as well because leaders in Baltimore -- in Maryland, statewide leaders, recognized that for Baltimore to reach its full potential, it needed this kind of investment after years of disinvestment. And so really investing in communities by revitalizing properties, rehabbing these vacant homes, rebuilding wealth in the City is a much better use of our precious tax dollars than deploying armed forces.

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This work creates a broadening tax base, housing for middle income families and workers, and long-term prosperity. So you know, I think if folks across the State want to look at the work that's happening and are really truly and sincerely concerned about how we build safe communities, it's these programs, right? It's this kind of investment. So thank you for all of your work on the ground in doing this and happy to support it today. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Amen.

Last, I'd like to elevate a few more projects that are receiving specific grants today. Four million dollars in NED funding will be going to the VIVA White Oak Project, which is a 280-acre master development designed to fuse Montgomery County's life sciences corridor with Prince George's County's Innovative hubs through major investments in retail and also in residential projects.

VIVA White Oak is an 18-year infrastructure project that's expected to create 9,000 permanent jobs and generate \$4.6 billion of annual economic activity. Once it is finished, the project will include a world class biology and life sciences center, a town center, conservation and recreational spaces, thousands of housing units -- thousands of housing units and much, much more. Additionally, \$5 million in SEED funding will support IonQ as it builds out its state-of-the-art quantum intelligence campus based in the Discovery District of the University of Maryland, College Park.

In January, I announced our Capital of Quantum Initiative, which is a public-private partnership that will deliver \$1 billion in total investment in the next five years to keep Maryland at the absolute forefront of quantum research and discovery where Maryland truly can and will be the world's capital of quantum. And for our part, the State has already committed 25 -- already committed over \$52 million toward this initiative including today's investment,

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which will allow us to continue leveraging Maryland's world class quantum ecosystem and create jobs and drive innovation that will enhance our national security capabilities.

With that, are there any further discussion on the Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. May I have a motion to approve the Secretary's Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the Secretary's Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much.

We'll proceed with the Department of Natural Resources Agenda.
Ms. Wilson, good morning.

MS. WILSON: Good morning, Governor --

GOVERNOR MOORE: Good to see you.

MS. WILSON: -- Madam Comptroller, Mr. Chief Deputy Treasurer. My name is Emily Wilson, Maryland Department of Natural Resources. We have 23 items today on our DNR Real Property Agenda. Happy to try to answer any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Perfect. Thank you so much, Ms. Wilson.

And I understand we have a speaker request for Item 14 which is a request to award \$298,000 to the Town of Snow Hill to plan and construct a new restroom in the Sturgis Park in Worcester County. And I know -- there he is. I'd

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like to recognize the former County Executive Rick Pollitt, who's the current Town Manager of the Town of Snow Hill, who has joined us in person to support this item.

Mr. County Executive, it is good to see you.

MR. POLLITT: It's always an honor to see you, Governor. I appreciate you having me for a couple of minutes this morning.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Of course.

MR. POLLITT: Governor Moore, Comptroller, and Chief Deputy Treasurer, I just want to say thank you. When I was County Executive, I started a little tradition that whenever we were on the agenda, I always liked to come and be here personally to say thank you because it's so easy to get trapped in the paperwork, and the meetings, and the constant conversations and considerations back and forth that sometimes we miss sight of the people that are on the other end that are going to be actually out there enjoying the things that you've helped us fund. And so I think it's so important that you do see a face and some thanks and appreciation for all of the good things that you do.

And while I'm saying that, I also want to acknowledge and appreciate very much the outreach that you have made to rural Maryland through the efforts of Secretary Day and Delegate Carl Anderton. We've been very much engaged in conversations with them, and we appreciate that. And as a County Executive from the Eastern Shore and longtime resident of the lower Eastern Shore, you know we've sometimes seen the Bay as a divider between rural and urban America. So as I was sitting here -- Maryland -- as I was sitting here this morning listening to all the progress in what we call a big city, it makes you feel proud. Even from, you know, the lowlands, the marshy areas of the lower shore, to see all this energy. To see this great sense of community, this commitment that we are one state and we are one community. And we want to feel -- we want to

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be a part of that. We just feel that we do have something really good going here. And it's all thanks to you, and your Administration, and your colleagues. And so today, I just wanted to come by and ask you to look at me as one great big thank you note.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you, that's so lovely.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Mr. County Executive, you are amazing and we're grateful for your leadership. And what you say is exactly right. You know for this state, it's important for this entire state to recognize and remember that all 24 jurisdictions, everybody that calls a place in Maryland home, they are the priority.

MR. POLLITT: We're one community.

GOVERNOR MOORE: We are one community.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yep.

MR. POLLITT: Thank you, please come to Snow Hill and see us.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Will do.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, absolutely.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Will do.

MR. POLLITT: Thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Great to see you again, thank you.

(Applause.)

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there any other discussion on the DNR Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Oh, I would be remiss if I didn't give a shout out to Aberdeen for their splash pad.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Which I love. Yay, splash pads.

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(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Moms and dads of the world understand --

MR. WILSON: They are wonderful amenities.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: -- how great splash pads are.

MR. WILSON: Indeed.

(Laughter.)

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes.

MS. WILSON: And I do know that Senator Augustine wrote in a letter of support --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes.

MS. WILSON: -- for Item 10A in Prince George's County --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: He did.

MS. WILSON: -- for the Rollingcrest Community Center.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: That's it. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any further discussion on the DNR Agenda? May I have a motion to approve the DNR Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the DNR Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And is there a second?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding, thank you so much.

MS. WILSON: Thank you very much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. Ms. Wilson, thank you.

Next up, with the University System of Maryland. Mr. Hickey, good morning.

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MR. HICKEY: Good morning, Governor, Madam Comptroller, Mr. Chief Deputy Treasurer. Tom Hickey representing the University System of Maryland. There are four items for your consideration. Happy to answer any questions you have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Wonderful, thank you so much.

Actually, I don't have any. Are there any questions for the USM Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. May I have a motion to approve the USM Agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the USM Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Mr. Hickey, thank you so much.

MR. HICKEY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Appreciate it.

Next up, we will move to the MDOT Agenda. Ms. Radomsky, good morning. Good to see you.

MS. RADOMSKY: Good morning, Governor. Great to see you. Good morning, Madam Controller and Mr. Chief Deputy Treasurer. For the record, my name is Valerie Radomsky, Chief Procurement Officer for the Maryland Department of Transportation. We are presenting 13 agenda items for your consideration today. We have representatives available to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you.

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COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I don't any questions.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Any questions?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: No.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I have no questions.

Is there a motion to approve the MDOT?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the MDOT

Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Is there a second?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding.

MS. RADOMSKY: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Ms. Radomsky, thank you so much.

And we will conclude with the DGS Agenda. Secretary Chaudhry,
good morning.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Morning, sir. Mr. Governor, Madam
Comptroller, and Mr. Chief Deputy Treasurer, for the record, I'm the Atif
Chaudhry, Secretary of the Maryland Department of General Services. Today,
the Department is presenting 71 items in our agenda. We are withdrawing eight
items today. Those eight items include 33-S, 34-S-OPT, 37-S-OPT/MOD, 38-S-
MOD, 39-S-MOD, 40-S-MOD, 58-RP, as well as 62-LT.

Our agenda does feature 15 capital grants and loans totaling over
\$7 million. I did want to highlight one in particular, and that is Item 8-CGL,
which provides \$500,000 to the Mayor and Town Council for our wonderful
Town of La Plata, which will be utilized to fund construction of a new community
center there which will include indoor gyms, kitchens, learning areas, outdoor
gardens, as well as sports zones for the local Town of La Plata there.

As we continue to keep an eye on our minority business

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participation, our agenda does feature nine contract awards and modifications to certified minority businesses totaling more than \$7.2 million. And we have agency representatives here to answer any questions you may have.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Outstanding. Thank you so much. I have a few items that I wanted to call up, lift up today. But first, we have a speaker request for Item 7, which is a request to award a \$250,000 capital grant to the Foxie G. Foundation to establish the Horses Helping People Center in Union Bridge and to support mental health needs of equine assisted therapy.

And Ms. Laurie Calhoun, who's the founder and director of the Foxie G. Foundation, would like to speak on this. It is wonderful to see you.

MS. CALHOUN: Good morning.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much.

MS. CALHOUN: It's so nice to see everybody. Thank you, Governor Moore, Comptroller Lieberman (sic), and Chief Deputy Treasurer. This means really the world to us and I wanted to -- we're based near Frederick, Maryland, and I wanted to make the trip just to thank you. This is our first time for a capital grant. We are an after-care organization for retired thoroughbreds. We work hand-in-hand with the racing industry once these horses transition out of racing, but some of these horses can't be ridden anymore or go to a second career.

So we specialize in horses that are pasture sound, can be out in the pasture and be sound, but they cannot be ridden. So what we have been doing since 2018, five of our horses have been doing ground-based equine-assisted therapy for veterans, first responders, and at-risk youth at the Baltimore Agricultural Center. And we began a capital campaign about five years ago to build a center in Frederick County. There's no center like us using retired thoroughbreds. And with the approval of this grant, we'll be able to make this a reality. And I just sincerely want to thank you for the support.

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GOVERNOR MOORE: I want to thank you for the leadership too.

MS. CALHOUN: Thank you so much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: This is really important work and it's also just really creative work.

MS. CALHOUN: Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: So thank you so much for what you do.

MS. CALHOUN: Yes, we have many testimonials from people. And I volunteer at the Ag Center when I can. And it's to see people be able to get back on the path to have good mental health. It's very inspiring for us and for our horses. Thank you.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you, Ms. Calhoun. Thank you.

We also have speaker request for Item 8, which is a request to award a \$500,000 capital grant to the Town of La Plata to build a new community center in Phoenix Run that will include indoor gyms and learning areas, outdoor gardens and sport zones, and --

MR. GONTRUM: It's Mayor James.

GOVERNOR MOORE: There she is.

MAYOR JAMES: You're just going to -- you're going to hear my voice because I run a town much better than I run a computer.

(Laughter.)

MAYOR JAMES: I apologize for that. But good morning, Governor Moore, Madam Comptroller, and Chief Deputy Treasurer. This has been a passion of mine since I came into office eight years ago. We have an area that is underserved and these kiddos need a place to go, and this is the last piece of our puzzle. We have been blessed to be connected with someone that is as energized as I and she runs the Boys & Girls Club. We are in talks with her. I see this project shovel-ready within six to nine months. I got to get it done because I

want it done on my term. As you well know, you know, we're only as good as four years.

So I just started this last four years -- or this next four years, and it's got to get done. So this is, with a public-private partnership and a new town manager who can oversee this, this is going someplace, but this last \$500,000 will help them. We're donating them land, which is five acres. We will build the building and just give them the operations. So hopefully, you'll find favorable for us and come down to the ribbon cutting when it is done soon.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. It is great hearing your voice. And it's great hearing the same kind of energy and excitement about this work now that I know -- I first heard it, when we first spoke about. And so well done and congratulations.

MAYOR JAMES: Thank you so much.

GOVERNOR MOORE: And I'd like to highlight Item 15, which is a \$100,000 capital grant to the Cube CoWork acquired property in Baltimore City. The Cube CoWork in the nation's largest Black women-owned coworking space that provides babysitting services. They serve women entrepreneurs with a focus on Black women, and mothers, and underrepresented communities. And since 2016, the Cube has supported over 3,000 female entrepreneurs by providing business development resources, community programing, childcare resources, and access to affordable workspace.

In addition to the \$100,000 grant on today's agenda, the Department of Housing and Community Development has awarded an additional \$725,000 loan to support their property acquisition. And this property will serve as the foundation for the Cube to expand their services and also to expand their programing as they continue to grow.

And I wanted to highlight it because I absolutely love the work that

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the Cube is doing when it comes to building an economy that works for everybody and making sure that everybody has a chance to not just participate, but also has a chance to be able to lead in a new and a changing economy. And not by only by investing in skilled apprenticeships and workforce training programs, but also ensuring that working mothers have a chance to have access to these services and the spaces that they need. And making sure that for all of our people they have a chance to learn how not just to be an employee, but have a chance to -- what it takes to be an employer.

I'd also like to highlight the work of Item 26, which is a request from the Department of Juvenile Services to award \$6.1 million to contract We Our Us to provide community-based credible mentoring support and life enrichment services to the youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

We Our Us is a men's unity movement in Baltimore that strategically provides intensive life-on-life mentoring to equip youth with the skills and supports they need to break cycles of violence, basically focusing on how are we addressing retaliatory nature of violence and being able to stop it before it continues to expand. We Our Us is providing the Department with a number of services to support youth who are the highest risk of violence inside of our communities.

And that includes daily life coaching and mentoring, support from professional trained staff with lived experience, support services for substance abuse disorders and mental health interventions, and acknowledgment of the fact that some of our juvenile and our adult facilities are actually the largest mental health providers that we have inside of the State of Maryland, and 24/7 rapid engagement for violence intervention and also violence mediation making sure that the retaliatory juvenile violence can come to a halt.

Just last week, they also put me through the ringer because I

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participated in a flag football game with members of We Our Us and a lot of the young people down in Baltimore City. And I love the fact that -- you know, as they say in We Our Us, "We're all we got. We're all we need." But today, we want to say to the leadership of We Our Us that we're here with you and we want to make sure we're doing our part to support the really important work that's happening.

Because right now, we've seen that collectively working together we're actually breaking the back of violent crime in our state. Maryland is having amongst the fastest drops in violent crime anywhere in the United States of America right now. That homicides in Maryland are down statewide over 20 percent since my inauguration. That in Baltimore, we're seeing historic reduction in violent crime over the last year including a 30 percent decrease in homicides and a 17 percent decline in nonfatal shootings.

The last time the homicide rate was this low in Baltimore City, I was not born yet. And we're currently on track to have the lowest number of homicides in Baltimore City since we began officially keeping crime statistics. It's a result of investments in our community resources and partnerships, and working together with groups like We Our Us. Groups that are on the ground listening to the community and getting them the supports that they need.

And we are thankful for these kind of groups, that instead of looking at violence as a laugh track or looking at violence as a moment for political opportunism that we are seemingly getting from our friends in the White House, that they are actually focusing on what's making people safe inside our communities in Maryland, and we deeply appreciate it.

Lastly, I would like to highlight Item 46, which is a request from the Department of Information Technology to award a \$300 million multi-award contract to provide digital services and agile development support to modernize

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Maryland's digital services.

I'd like to turn it over to our DoIT Secretary, Secretary Katie Savage, to share more about this item. Secretary Savage, good morning.

MS. SAVAGE: Good morning.

GOVERNOR MOORE: It's great to see you.

MS. SAVAGE: Great to see you as well, Mr. Governor, and Madam Comptroller, and Chief Deputy Treasurer. My name is Katie Savage and I'm the Secretary of the Department of Information Technology. As the Governor said, I'm here to speak about the Agile Digital Experience Product Transformation, or Adept Contract Vehicle. Specifically, why it's critical in the face of cyber security and meeting federal accessibility requirements.

So digital has become the primary method for public interaction. We use technology to design and develop websites and digital services that meet the public's needs for high quality digital experiences. When I started in this role, I inherited a convoluted website architecture of thousands of websites requiring actual coding. In this day and age with low code and no-code solutions, we should be using a web platform that is far easier to maintain. Even Microsoft no longer sustains our solution, signaling how outdated it is.

But more importantly, how critical it is that -- or how vulnerable we are to cybersecurity security attacks. Recently, within the last month, Maryland was impacted by the global Microsoft SharePoint incident, which affected governments, and websites, and industries around the world. Cybersecurity threats are becoming more sophisticated and we must be aggressive and proactive to protect Marylander's ability to access critical benefits and services online.

Just this morning, there was a report on the news that the State of Nevada's entire web presence is shut down, including their DMV. So this is a

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really near-term -- really near-term need. In addition, our websites and transactional applications mean longer wait times for critical benefits and professional licenses and higher call volumes that create operational and financial inefficiencies for the State.

In addition to being hard to use for many Marylanders, there are, in many cases, impossible to use for individuals with disabilities who are using assistive technology. The updated Title II Americans with Disabilities Act from the Department of Justice requires state and local government entities to ensure their websites and mobile applications are accessible to people with disabilities by April 24th of next year. Maryland has a very large number of artifacts that are subject to this regulation. Adept is critical to Maryland to being able to bring the necessary skill sets required to support this effort in support of the DOJ timeline.

I will also note that Adept is intended to support smaller discovery efforts to help the State Build And Buy Technology Smarter, a model that was highlighted in House Bill 738 passed earlier this year. To that end, all new potential Adept work orders will come through DoIT and will be assessed by our Maryland Digital Service for appropriateness on this contract vehicle. All work orders will be issued through and overseen by the Maryland Digital Service, allowing us to better control costs, scope, and outcomes.

Finally, Adept will help our economy. Half of the vendors selected for Adept are headquartered in or have offices in Maryland, and 88 percent are based in the broader DMV region. The eight selected firms include over 1,400 staff who are Maryland residents, and all firms are planning to hire Marylanders to support Adept work orders creating significant opportunities and growth for Marylanders. DoIT plans to provide quarterly reporting on all work orders that are issued.

In conclusion, the Adept Contract Vehicle will help us improve

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digital services for Marylanders, help address accessibility issues, the critical cybersecurity issues we're facing, and create economic opportunities for Maryland companies. So for these reasons, I ask that you strongly consider approving this contract vehicle today. I'm happy to answer any questions or schedule additional time to discuss.

GOVERNOR MOORE: All right. Thank you so much, Madam Secretary. One question I did have for the vendors, I know one of the things that as I was reading through (indiscernible) was talking about the Maryland jobs. That the vendors has 1,400 Maryland jobs; is that correct?

MS. SAVAGE: That's correct. So across the eight firms, their subcontractors, and MBE partners, there are over 1,400 current Maryland employees. All of these firms also plan to hire additional Marylanders, as needed, to support the Adept work orders.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. Thank you so much.

Madam Comptroller?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Sure, thanks.

Thanks so much, Secretary Savage, for being here. And thank you, Governor. I have no concern on the substance of this contract. You and I both agree. You know, I also inherited an agency that badly needed updating in terms of its web presence and digital infrastructure. You know, we've worked hand-in-glove with you all on that and are really proud of the progress that we've made. So I absolutely agree that the work that you all are doing, and that your team is doing, is totally essential in moving us and the State in the right direction. So kudos.

MS. SAVAGE: We appreciate that.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: I am concerned about the contract vehicle, the economic structure, and the value to the State when I look at this

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contract. And so just wanted to sort of go through -- you know, you and I have talked about this and I really appreciate that. You know, to go back a little bit, so one of the things you were talking about, so two of the eight firms are resident businesses, but only one of the eight firms is actually headquartered in Maryland, correct?

MS. SAVAGE: I believe that is higher than --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: That's what we have and that's what we've looked at.

MS. SAVAGE: Okay.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: And you know, one of the reasons that I think that happened is, you know, we have a resident business preference for State procurements, but it's only good if it's used. It's COMAR 21.05.03.03, and it notes that procurement officers may require offerors to submit, quote, "A narrative describing benefits that will accrue to the Maryland economy as a direct or indirect result of its performance of the contract. Proposals will be evaluated to assess the benefits Maryland's economy specifically offered."

And that evaluation factor is not required, but it's highly encouraged. I think it should be required for all RFPs because I think that economic benefit narrative allows resident and nonresident businesses to demonstrate how their proposal is most advantageous to the State beyond price and technical skills. But that was taken out of the RFP, as I understand it, after publication by DGS. Is that -- that's correct, right?

MS. SAVAGE: Well, I'll turn it over perhaps to Wallace to speak more about that.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Sure.

MS. SAVAGE: To go back to your question about the eight firms. So one, you're right, one is actually headquartered here, but three have satellite

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offices, bringing us to four.

And Wallace, if you want to just speak more to the economic benefit?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Great.

MR. SERMONS: Absolutely.

And good morning, Mr. Governor, Madam Comptroller, Deputy Chief Treasurer. So for the economics benefits factor, it's something that is a useful tool for procurement but is not something that you would do at a master contract level. It's more akin to use when you have a direct contract where you know exactly what the scope is.

Here, we don't know exactly what the scope of each work order would be; therefore, you wouldn't be able to adequately measure exactly how many employees would be deployed, how many jobs would be created for Marylanders. You wouldn't know that until the work order level. So if we were to deploy that at, let's say, the solicitation level, it would be speculative. We wouldn't be evaluating apples to apples in that case. We wouldn't be able to provide -- I know there were conversations early on regarding preferences for Marylanders or Maryland-based businesses. I'm a proud Marylander myself. However, at this point in time through our discussions and during the General Assembly session, there was a determination made that we wouldn't provide preferential treatment for Maryland firms because of the reciprocity that is applied through other states. That is something that I believe that Board staff will be taking up to see what's -- take up a study to see exactly what that would look like.

We don't want to disadvantage any Maryland firms that have opportunities out of state. For instance -- and I want to give an example without belaboring the point. If we were to give a 10 percent preference, let's say for instance for a Maryland-based firm, then if that Maryland-based firm the majority

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of their work was, let's say, in New York, New York, through their reciprocity, could then reduce that firm's score by 10 percent.

And since we don't know for each firm in Maryland how much work they have out of state, at this point we don't put that in -- we don't use that. We don't use any type of preference in our solicitations. However, in the future for contracts where we have a defined scope, not at the work order level, but a defined scope up front, that is something that we intend to put on. I know we have it as a "may," but we also have said that we'd apply reciprocity as a shout-out in the Governor's executive order (indiscernible).

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thanks, Mr. Sermons.

MR. SERMONS: Of course.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: You know -- you said you wouldn't do it for a master's contract. I just want to clarify you wouldn't do it for a master contract. In my preference, we would do it for a master contract because I want to just sort of respectfully push back that actually it's a narrative and you can have firms explain to you the value that they -- the value creation that they bring to the State, even at the master contract level.

I understand that your position is that that is not something that we do. I'm telling you that I think we should be doing it. Because in narrative form, that's information that we can glean from those companies to understand better how they're working. It doesn't need to be numerical, it's a narrative. And we can even give them hypotheticals, if we wanted to, to get more in the weeds on the numbers. So I totally understand your point, my viewpoint is just different.

MR. SERMONS: Understood.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So thank you for that and I do -- I appreciate the reciprocity issue. Of course, that's why we worked with you all to add that study to the legislation that passed and -- because right now, it's all

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completely hypothetical. We've never been given evidence of a single factual situation where a state outside of Maryland has imposed some sort of penalty on any other company or has even threatened to. I mean, we don't track what our businesses are doing out of state, so it's a challenge to prove that right now.

I'll say this is even more, I think, relevant for me right now. You know, each of us has different viewpoints from where we sit, which is why we're all on the Board of Public Works. And my viewpoint is also as the Revenue Administrator of the State. These companies and companies like them, I should say mostly Maryland-based companies right now, are the ones that we've been talking with about the tech tax.

Almost every week I have conversations with companies in Maryland who have questions about the tech tax, who don't understand what it means, who are concerned about what it means for their economic model. And one of my concerns -- and this is why, you know, we sent a letter to you all last week explaining that the tech tax actually changes the underlying economics of some of these contracts. And because, you know, unbeknownst to you, you were bidding this out before that was passed.

It's not entirely clear to me that these companies will be able to even stay within the \$300 million threshold for the work that you've envisioned, or that they would be able to do things at the amount that they have quoted in any way, or the hourly rate they've quoted to you in any way. Certainly, they can do the work. But I think it's really TBD on whether they can do it at the levels that they've quoted to you, given what the tech tax may mean for them and their subcontractors more importantly.

Even for work, you know, I think it's just going to -- it's going to change the economics of the contracts that companies are doing. And you know, I'm not saying that's good or bad. It just changes it. And because this was a bid

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out and people responded to it prior to that, I think that we now don't have any necessarily accurate answer of what is going to happen. But I everyday talk to Maryland businesses about the tech tax and about locating in Maryland, and so it's even more important to me now that we're working with our Maryland-based firms.

I also wanted to ask about the -- and I think probably -- well, Mr. Sermons, you're probably the right person still to talk about this. My understanding is that -- or maybe you could just explain why services covered by this contract cannot be procured using the CATS+ contract.

MR. SERMONS: So I guess it's a difference in vehicle and how we order. One is a secondary competition, that's the CATS+ contract. For the CATS+ contract, it wouldn't allow us for rapid deployment because each individual instance would require a separate competition.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Right.

MR. SERMONS: This is the difference between a task order mechanism and a work order mechanism.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Right.

MR. SERMONS: My client needs fast deployment for the reasons that they've described programmatically.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah.

MR. SERMONS: And in order to support the State and the State's needs, whether it's for exploration or immediate needs, we need to be able to deliver via work order. I know you had discussed prior about selling amounts. There's a close nexus to the conversation regarding understanding exactly the scope of work versus what the ceiling amount is. This is packaged at the work order level, meaning my client will have the opportunity to negotiate each work order. The State is not obligated; we are authorizing \$300 million. We may

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never use the ceiling amount and each order is independently priced.

For that amount, even with the sales and use tax -- remember the sales and use tax, you have to look at the classification of the cost there. So the cost classification is basically the indirect cost, which wouldn't be applicable to the State. The majority of this contract is -- I'm sorry, the direct cost -- majority of this contract is direct cost, so it's direct labor. And as that prime contractor bills the State, the prime contractor would not be billing the State with sales and use tax.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Oh, I know. Yeah, I think you're missing my larger point, which is that every business doing work in Maryland right now, it's economics have changed. And so they will need to change their pricing structure to match that.

MR. SERMONS: It's to --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Whether they're doing work for the State or not.

MR. SERMONS: Understood.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yeah.

MR. SERMONS: And it's to the degree of that change. It's going to depend on the NAICS codes that they use for their other direct costs and the indirect costs that applies across all of their contracts.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes, so I mean this is a concern for me, the lack of secondary competition. And you know, there are a number of things that are concerning to me about this contract vehicle. But this really stands out to me because by not doing the secondary competition, that shifts the procurement process from a task order based one, which is subject to approval by the Board of Public Works, to a work order based, which is not subject to BPW approval. And so there's no transparency around the pricing.

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So you noted that your client, DoIT, would be negotiating on the work order, so this is like a round robin. So when they have work, you know, whoever gets it will say, "V-Tech Solutions is the next up because they haven't gotten the --" you know, their next up in the contract you'd go to V-Tech Solutions or the agency would go to V-Tech Solutions and say, "This is what we want."

First, like you have no idea if V-Tech Solutions is the best of all these firms at delivering that precise service. And second, the Agency is then negotiating blindly with them because they don't know what any of these other firms would have charged for that work. They're just going back and forth with one firm trying to get them to what the Agency feels is reasonable, even if another firm on this list could have done that same work better or for less money. And there's no daylight on that. There's no transparency at all. And that's my big concern is that lack of transparency about using this type of vehicle and this work order-based model.

I do understand about wanting to do this rapidly and rapid deployment to which, I guess, you know, my question would be like what is OSP done to consider revising and resoliciting CATS+ or revising the OSP process for task orders? Like how have you -- what have you done to make like -- what can we do or what have you done to like make that process faster. So we can still do the secondary competition and make sure we're getting best value, but do it in a quicker way.

MR. SERMONS: Well, that was done through the Procurement Reform Act of 2025, where we isolated what the competition would look like at different dollar values. That was in thoughts of the CATS+ contract that has hundreds of vendors on there, which does not make it advantageous for this client or any other state agency client to utilize. It's akin to going full and open at that

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point. And again for rapid deployment, the competitive nature of it was conducted at the prime contracting level. That is where the value was achieved to ensure that each of those vendors had the technical capabilities to perform the activity.

We have subject matter experts within the State that then can review what that (indiscernible) looks like. We have ceiling rates, so regardless of what that proposal comes in for the project-based work order, they can negotiate. They still also can conduct market research outside of that vehicle to see exactly how other vendors would have priced it and what their technical solution would look like. We're not hindered in taking any of those effects. I mean, this is akin to a single award IDIQ that is used all across the country. And in those instances, the same thing, once we have the requirements, it's rapid delivery and we would be negotiating.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: So if you're -- if you've improved CATS+ to the last -- through the procurement reform bill, I don't understand the need to move away from secondary competition. I mean, I'll just say like in my agency, we like having the freedom. You know, I want to be able to say, "This is what we're doing, give me your best offer. Tell me what you can do" to the CATS+ team. And that worked for us, when we developed our website and whatnot. It was a good model.

So to me, it just feels like you're taking away options from the agency. And if we've actually improved the vehicle through this bill, I'm not sure what the -- like then at what cost? If the reason to do it was for rapid deployment, but you've now taken away that reason, why not provide the extra transparency and options to agencies?

MR. SERMONS: Understand. So we've approved the ordering of the CATS+ vehicle, but we cannot change the nature of that vehicle. This

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particular procurement was crafted with the requirement that was needed for the client. The CATS+ vehicle is a separate vehicle that was all in cumbersome and it actually supports IT from different realms, but not precisely what is needed for this requirement. So although we have improved the competitive nature of it, we have not improved the delivery. This vehicle was precisely for the delivery needed for the client.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Right. So I guess -- sorry, I'm harping on this, but -- sorry, everyone -- but it feels like maybe the CATS+ vehicle wasn't the right vehicle then, but you could have, since you changed the law, kept the secondary competition piece in now that that works better. I mean, that's my -- I guess that -- at the end of the day, like without secondary competition, it's a real concern.

MR. SERMONS: You --

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: And that's why we exist. This is the only time the General Assembly knows what's being approved. It's, you know, it's the only time you actually get to see if we're getting best value. It's being able to compare prices from one another. I mean, I'll even say vendors have expressed frustration to me about, you know, Agile because when work is assigned on a rotational basis, vendors have very little agency over what work they're performing on the contract. And if they decline a work order, you know, they risk not being assigned another opportunity until the State works its way through the entire list. And so you know, I mean, I have concerns, I guess, about this type of vehicle moving forward and I hope I don't see it again.

MR. SERMONS: No, we look forward to working in partnership with your office and the Board to change the rules related to work orders. But as it stands, work orders cannot be competed.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Yes.

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MR. SERMONS: So work orders must be round robin.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Right, yeah. And I think that it should be all secondary competition. And if you have a list of pre-approved vendors, you know that it can be done, then there can be a more quickly created RFP and procurement through that. And that should be the benefit to those businesses, hopefully Maryland-based businesses, who have been awarded on that master contract. So I'll be --

MR. CHAUDHRY: I just want to add also, Madam Comptroller, that it's important to note that, you know, as we're going through this, this system that's been set up for the Adept, where the Maryland Digital Service is reviewing all these and they're actually -- the procurement is different from traditionally in CATS+ where the agencies themselves are reporting directly.

And what we've heard from a lot of the vendors and a lot of our agencies is that going through the CATS+ process, obviously it can be cumbersome. It takes long time. And actually, sometimes when you try to get the resources on board, they're already gone to other work orders or gone to other firms because we're not able to capture them as quickly as we need them to.

So I think we're definitely interested in maintaining transparency as best we can with all these different things, while ensuring we have the level of responsiveness that we need to get these work orders initiated. And we will also be doing quarterly reporting as well on all the work orders, so there is transparency there. But being managed directly by DoIT, not by the agency, will certainly help when it comes to pricing, but also when it comes to making sure that we are actually procuring the services that are needed from all of our other sister agencies.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Understood. And I think, you know, my final point is just as a leader of an agency, I'm concerned about this

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new preference for work order-based contracts. I think agencies are disadvantaged by either requiring them to use whatever vendor is next in line for a work order with no regard to their skill set and whether it matches, or conducting a completely full procurement.

And since CATS+ is nearing its end, I think there should be another option that allows for secondary competition and greater flexibility for agencies. As things currently stand, I think the shift to only using work order-based contracts is not good for Maryland businesses and our State agencies. And I worry, you know, there's now eight firms for the next umpteen years that will be able to have a work order in this way.

And that cuts out a lot of other potential Maryland-based firms from doing this work, unless an agency goes through a whole full RFP process, which, of course, is longer than many of us would like. So you know, just based on my concern around the in-state headquartered businesses, and the round robin and lack of secondary competition, and the effects of the tech tax on what the pricing through this, and going to have to decline to vote for this right now, but thank you for your work on it.

MR. CHAUDHRY: Appreciate. Thank you.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Sure.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. And so if there's no further discussion on it, we'll pull Item 46 as well as Items 16, 17, and 18. And we'll pull those for a separate vote. So first, let's take up 16, 17, and 18. On those items, may I have a motion to approve?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: So moved.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. I will second it, and the motion passes two to one with the Comptroller voting in the negative.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: And can I just note, just for the

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record, that I have no concerns about the substance of the grant, temporary exceptions for one year, about the substance of them. They're all excellent organizations and -- but again, when a grantee is unable to spend down the fund in seven years, not only do communities suffer, but an opportunity has been taken away from another organization in need, it's my belief that if DGS is in the wrong, if something has happened, that they should simply put it in the next year's capital bill for the same amount rather than granting a one-year extension. So that is why I declined to vote for this. Thanks.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you. And next, we'll take up Item 46. On this item, may I have a motion to approve?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: So moved.

GOVERNOR MOORE: I will second it. The item passes two to one with the Comptroller voting in the negative.

On the remaining items of the DGS Agenda, may I have motion to approve that agenda?

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Motion to approve the DGS Agenda.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Okay. And is there a second?

CHIEF DEPUTY TREASURER MARTIN: Second.

GOVERNOR MOORE: Thank you so much. This concludes today's BPW meeting. The next one will be September 10th. Thank you all and enjoy the rest of August.

COMPTROLLER LIERMAN: Thank you.

(Whereupon, at 11:08 a.m., the meeting was concluded.)