



Maryland

Board of Public Works

Public Comments

Comments Received for the January 29, 2025 Board of Public Works Meeting:

Agenda: Department of General Services

Item: 4-CGL

Name: Lori Lilly

Organization: Howard EcoWorks

Position: Support

Comment: I respectfully ask your support to fund Item 4-CGL, EcoWorks Green Jobs Training Center in Howard County. This is a unique opportunity to support the development of a regional training hub for young adults, unemployed and under-employed individuals, to enter career pathways in the environmental industry. This property, its building and use will also serve as a model of conservation and best practices for environmental sustainability. EcoWorks is a valued community leader and partner to Howard County Government and is poised to serve the central MD region and its communities to prepare and respond to short and long-term impacts of climate change. Thank you for your consideration.

Name: Samantha Lewis

Organization: Howard EcoWorks

Position: Support

Comment: I respectfully ask your support to fund Item 4-CGL, EcoWorks Green Jobs Training Center in Howard County. This is a unique opportunity to support the development of a regional training hub for young adults, unemployed and under-employed individuals, to enter career pathways in the environmental industry. This property, its building and use will also serve as a model of conservation and best practices for environmental sustainability. EcoWorks is a valued community leader and partner to Howard County Government and is poised to serve the central MD region and its communities to prepare and respond to short and long-term impacts of climate change. Thank you for your consideration.

Name: Matthew Hemler

Organization:

Position: Support

Comments: I respectfully ask your support to fund Item 4-CGL, EcoWorks Green Jobs Training Center in Howard County. I was unemployed for over a year and was struggling to find work in the environmental industry until I stumbled upon Howard Ecoworks. I was accepted into their workforce development program where I acquired valuable skills and certifications and was given support to start my career. Funding this item will share the opportunity I received with many more people and help them succeed in the environmental industry.

Name: Zsuzsanna Cooke

Organization:

Position: Support

Comments: I respectfully ask your support to fund Item 4-CGL, EcoWorks Green Jobs Training Center in Howard County. This is a unique opportunity to support the development of a regional training hub for young adults, unemployed and under-employed individuals, to enter career pathways in the environmental industry. This property, its building and use will also serve as a model of conservation and best practices for environmental sustainability. EcoWorks is a valued community leader and partner to Howard County Government and is poised to serve the central MD region and its communities to prepare and respond to short and long-term impacts of climate change. Thank you for your consideration.

Name: Elura Morris

Organization: Howard EcoWorks

Position: Support

Comments: Howard EcoWorks has done a tremendous job of transforming local communities and empowering others to take action. As a former crew member, I can testify that the program engages in real transformation for ecosystems, neighborhoods, and the people in the programs. This organization takes real steps towards climate action while educating and providing career pathways. By supporting this legislation, it would expand their opportunities to engage and take more action in the Baltimore Region. The property in Glenwood is essential for centralizing operations and creating a sustainable model for community growth between nature and people. There is a beautiful vision here that I feel fully represents the direction climate-conscious folks want to go, where we work with nature and restoration.

Name: Lydia Perez Poole

Organization: Howard EcoWorks (Board Member)

Position: Support

Comments: I respectfully ask your support to fund Item 4-CGL, EcoWorks Green Jobs Training Center in Howard County. This is a great opportunity to support the development of a training hub for individuals that want to pursue a career in the environmental industry. This property will also serve as a model of conservation and best practices for environmental sustainability in Maryland. EcoWorks is a valued community leader and partner to Howard County Government and this funding will also help us be better equipped to support the increasing needs of the central MD region and its communities to prepare and respond to short and long-term impacts of climate change. Thank you for considering to support Howard EcoWorks.

Agenda: Department of General Services

Item: 21-IT

Name: Michael Paddy

Organization: Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC)

Position: Support

Comments: "The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) mission is to develop and maintain a statewide partnership of individuals and organizations committed to improving the health of all Marylanders through increased oral health promotion, disease prevention, education, advocacy and access to oral health care. In 2022, Maryland took a significant step forward when the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation to establish the Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage Program. As of January 2025, over 181,000 Marylanders have accessed dental services, many for the first time in years. This program will result in improvements in health outcomes for thousands of Marylanders.

As oral health is integral to overall health, MDAC recognizes the importance of an effective dental administrative services organization. MDAC supports DentaQuest, which has recently submitted a proposal in response to the Request for Proposal (RFP) issued by the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW), which is being considered at the January 29th meeting. MDAC supports the recommendation of the Department of Health on DentaQuest's bid, primarily due to the organization's comprehensive understanding of federal requirements, and the specific needs outlined in the RFP.

DentaQuest has demonstrated a unique capability to navigate the complexities associated with federal guidelines pertinent to dental benefit administrators. With a significant emphasis on compliance, DentaQuest's proposal reflects an in-depth comprehension of the stipulated rules and an innovative approach to enhancing dental care access for Maryland residents. Their commitment to federally mandated practices ensures that all recipients of dental benefits will receive the support and resources necessary for effective oral health management.

The MDAC recognizes the barriers many Maryland residents face in obtaining adequate oral health services—barriers that are exacerbated by socioeconomic factors, geographic location, and funding limitations. Currently, SKYGEN, the incumbent, has presented the Department of Health with a number of challenges throughout the term of the contract. Additionally, MDAC has received feedback from some in the oral health community, including consumers, that connecting with Skygen representatives has been challenging. MDAC agrees with the Department of Health that it is critical that this award to DentaQuest moves forward as soon as possible to allow for a smooth transition to the new vendor, enabling them to assume full operations and administration of the Medicaid Dental Benefits program.

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition firmly believes that DentaQuest's proposal is a strategic choice for the state's dental benefits administration. With a strong foundation in federal compliance, a commitment to addressing specific RFP requirements, and a focus on equity and access, DentaQuest is well-positioned to make a positive impact on oral health in Maryland.

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Agenda: Department of General Services

Item: 1-CGL

Name: Leah Paley

Organization: Anne Arundel County Food Bank, Inc.

Position: Support

Comments: "To: The Honorable Wes Moore, Governor; Brooke Lierman, Comptroller and Dereck Davis, Treasurer; Maryland Board of Public Works Members

From: Anne Arundel County Food Bank, Inc.

RE: Written Comments in Support of Funding for DGS Item 23-509 (SL-190-230-038)

The Anne Arundel County Food Bank (AACFB) respectfully requests that the Department of General Services Office of State Procurement funds DGS Item 23-509 in full (\$184,362.80) to support the purchase of a refrigerated truck and repairs to an interior freezer by the AACFB.

Work of the Anne Arundel County Food Bank

The AACFB provides essential nutrition to families in need but also addresses food justice issues. Often, low-income families do not have access to fresh produce and lean meats, relying instead on less healthy options that are shelf stable but low in nutritional value and high in sodium and fat. Poor health outcomes such as heart disease and diabetes are strongly correlated to such diets. By providing fresh options to the people we serve, the AACFB is helping to ensure healthier outcomes. Families with access to fresh foods can prepare them according to their preferences and traditions, allowing them to nourish both body and spirit. AACFB has no membership, processing, or delivery fees and has served as the only county-wide food bank in Anne Arundel since 1986.

In FY 2024 (our most recent complete fiscal year, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024), AACFB distributed 4.1 million pounds of food and necessities, including 799,654 pounds of produce and 563,444 pounds of proteins, through our 77 Network Partners and our direct service Mobile Pantry Program. The AACFB met 605,654 service requests from our neighbors. In FY24, on average, Food Bank operations supported 48,000 instances of service every month. Currently, that average has increased to 51,000. In addition to supplemental food, the AACFB also provides supplies to meet the specific needs of babies (diapers and wipes) and seniors (incontinence supplies and nutritional beverages).

Grant Use and Impact

The AACFB purchased a new 2023, 22-foot refrigerated Isuzu truck to accommodate the many sizeable food donation pickups made each week for redistribution to Anne Arundel County residents in need. The AACFB also made essential repairs to the collapsing ceiling of its walk-in freezer which stores frozen food that the Food Bank receives from the U.S. Government through the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP.)

The new 2023 truck and freezer repairs ensure that the AACFB can provide the highest standard of care for food received, maintaining strict compliance with all regulations and best practices regarding food safety, proper handling, and storage. These items constitute essential resources for Food Bank operations and meeting the needs of the neighbors we serve. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leah A. Paley, LMSW
Chief Executive Officer

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