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April 6, 2022

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen

110 Hart Senate Office Building

United States Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Van Hollen:

I am writing on behalf of the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce to express our support for Alpha Genesis Community Development Corporation's (AGCDC) application for support of the North Star Project.

AGCDC is spearheading a project that will improve the viewing area for the Harriet Tubman Mural and facades of surrounding properties. The 420-422 Race Street building is in peril and has been an anchor tenant in the 400 block of Race Street for decades. The repairs and upgrades needed for this building far exceed the capability and profitability that one single business can support. AGCDC, in a public private partnership, believes the property can be repurposed into the North Star Village (NSV).

The NSV Community project will combine the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway with cultural tourism creating a significant social impact for Dorchester County. A key component of the project will be providing an extended experience for the thousands of tourists coming to visit the birthplace of Harriet Tubman. This project is designed to address one of the most significant challenges faced by visitors to our downtown – lodging.

This project will offer 15 to 18 rooms of Culturally Inspired downtown lodging on the second floor and event spaces, retail shops, and restaurants on the first floor. The project will provide an essential connection between the Take My Hand Mural and the new Beacon of Hope Harriet Tubman Statue.

We hope you will consider this important project for funding.

If you have any questions do not hesitate in reaching out.

Sincerely,

William A. Christopher, President/CEO