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MD PSC to Hold Supplier Diversity Conference, Notes Record Spend by Utilities in Program's 30th Year

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The Maryland Public Service Commission will hold its annual conference **Tuesday, June 20, 2023**, for utility companies to report on their contracts with diverse suppliers. The conference, which in 2023 marks its 30th year, will take place beginning at 10 a.m. at the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative's (SMECO) Engineering and Operations Center, 14950 Cooperative Place in Hughesville (Charles County).

The proceeding will review the 2022 diverse supplier procurements, totaling more than \$1.5 billion (or 36.9%)—a milestone achievement—by participating companies, which include electricity, natural gas, transportation and telecommunication providers. The Supplier Diversity Program is a voluntary program in which companies strive to award 25 percent of their total procurement spend to minority-, women-, veteran- (including service-disabled), and LGBTQ-owned and non-profit businesses. The utility companies reported spending nearly \$4.2 billion on all goods and services in 2022.

Of note during Pride Month (June), spending in 2022 with LGBTQ-owned companies rose to \$88,167. While a proportionally small amount, it is nearly triple the amount spent in 2020 and indicates increasing growth. This is the fourth year this category has been eligible for reporting purposes.

At this year's hearing utilities, elected officials, advocates and contractors will celebrate program achievements, share best practices and lessons learned, as well as share innovative ways to reach diversity goals, particularly for those companies rebuilding after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission will issue its public determination by late summer.

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About the Public Service Commission:

The Maryland Public Service Commission regulates electric and gas utilities and suppliers, telephone companies (land lines), certain water and sewer companies, passenger motor vehicle carriers for hire (sedans, limousines, buses, Uber, Lyft), taxicab companies (in Baltimore City and County, Charles County, Cumberland and Hagerstown) and bay pilot rates.