



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John W. Mannion

## Senator Mannion And Assemblyman Stirpe Introduce Legislation To Reform Certification Process And Prevent Bureaucratic Backlogs For Minority And Women-Owned Business Enterprises

SENATOR JOHN W. MANNION January 16, 2024

ALBANY, NY –Senator John W. Mannion and Assemblyman Al Stirpe today announced legislation (S-7836/A-8468) to reform the certification process and prevent bureaucratic backlogs for Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs.)

Under the current system, even minor omissions or technical errors in an application can lead to denial or even revocation of MWBE certification. This creates significant difficulties for businesses including lost contracts and revenue, and impacts availability of state services.

Senator Mannion and Assemblyman Stirpe’s bill creates a sixty day ‘curing period’ for MWBEs to amend applications while removing unnecessary barriers to the program. It will also help the state meet its MWBE contracting goals.

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*Senator John W. Mannion said, “MWBE certification needs to be more flexible and supportive, which is why I am proposing a sixty-day curing period for applications that need technical fixes from businesses that would otherwise qualify. Meeting and maintaining New*

*York's ambitious 30 percent utilization goal for MWBE contracting requires a better certification process with fewer roadblocks and a reasonable window of time to fix minor errors."*

Assemblyman Albert A. Stirpe, Jr. said, "As chair of the Assembly Small Business Committee I have seen how the MWBE certification process has, in some cases, stymied the progress New York State hopes to achieve in reaching its goals. This legislation will help businesses going through the MWBE certification process by offering an opportunity for them to respond to reviews of their application. This sixty-day curing period will undoubtedly result in more MWBE business being available for state and local governments contracts."

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*Me'Shae Rolling, Executive Director of the Upstate Minority Economic Alliance said, "The Upstate Minority Economic Alliance supports actions that mitigate barriers to obtaining MWBE certification and recertification. Unnecessary procedural roadblocks only serve to impede (re)certification status and procurement opportunities by the very enterprises the system is intended to level the playing field for."*

New York state is home to the highest MWBE utilization rate in the country and has a goal of 30 percent. The program allows certified businesses opportunities to contract with state and local governments, supporting the state's economy, meeting government's procurement needs, and promoting diversity. More than 9,000 businesses have been awarded \$29 billion in government contracts since the program's inception.

The bill represents a crucial step towards creating a more equitable and efficient MWBE certification system, fostering stronger businesses and a more vibrant economy for all New Yorkers.

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