



May 15, 2023

Rep. Jason Hoskins
Committee Chair, Economic Development and Small Business
JasonHoskins@house.mi.gov

RE: Support for House Bill 164 and Request to Expedite Approval with Immediate Effect

Representative Hoskins:

The Downtown Detroit Partnership, Inc. (DDP), a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to serving Detroit and its Downtown neighborhood since 1922, manages the daily operations of the Downtown Detroit Business Improvement Zone (BIZ) on behalf of the BIZ board of directors, a diverse group of property owners, small businesses, and other community leaders appointed by their peers. Since

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Downtown Detroit Partnership, we support House Bill 4454 and urge you to act swiftly, amending the Business Improvement Zone Act (Chapter 2 of the Principal Shopping District Act) to restore proportionate voting, a provision that was removed from the Act in June 2020 without input from communities who use the tool. Proportionate voting enables proportionate assessments, meaning large property owners pay more and small property owners pay less – an equitable distribution of costs and benefits. Smaller property owners in our community have expressed that being part of the BIZ has helped amplify their voices.

Established in 2014, the Downtown Detroit BIZ must be reauthorized before the current 10-year term expires in early 2024. The BIZ Act has enabled the Downtown Detroit business community to contribute about \$45 Million to date to fund our commitment to a Downtown that is clean, safe, and inviting. The BIZ augments city services and enhances the public realm, caring for our Downtown to a higher standard of excellence that a municipal budget cannot afford. It also fosters community amongst Downtown business and property owners, small and large.

In addition to Downtown's reauthorization, we have two proposed Business Improvement Zones in our community that have strong support but are stalled until the BIZ Act is corrected. The Act allows the Downtown BIZ program to be leveraged to efficiently provide services in other neighborhoods. The positive impact of a Business Improvement Zone is exponential.

We urge the Michigan Legislature to move the proposed legislation expeditiously so that we can proceed with a reauthorization vote, making way for another decade of private investment for the benefit of the community at no cost to the local government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eric B. Larson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eric B. Larson, Chief Executive Officer

CC: Representative Tyrone Carter, TyroneCarter@house.mi.gov
Elaine Kupiec, Committee Clerk, ekupiec@house.mi.gov

Downtown Detroit Partnership Board Of Directors

