



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hill CDC Takes Delegation of Business and Development Advocates to State Capitol

Monday, March 12, 2018 from 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM
State Capitol Building in Harrisburg

At the **Hill Community Development Corporation's** (Hill CDC) last community meeting in February, the organization encouraged resident advocacy for Hill District development and promised to follow-up with a group visit to the Capital.

As timing would have it, their plans to visit the Capital are now being coupled with Representative Jake Wheatley's MWDBE Lobby Day – an annual event he has hosted for years.

"I look forward to MWDBE Lobby Day every year because it is one of my greatest rewards as a State Representative to not only promote, but showcase, such a diverse group of entrepreneurs. Helping connect more women, minority and veteran business owners to new opportunities within the Commonwealth makes our communities stronger and more vibrant." – State Representative Jake Wheatley, Jr.

Together, a total of **50 business owners and participants** will converge upon the State Capitol to advocate for economic revitalization of the Hill District and equal opportunities for businesses owned by MWDBE firms.

In Harrisburg, the **Hill CDC** and **State Representative Jake Wheatley** will participate in several "**MWDBE Lobby Day**" activities, which includes the "Entrepreneurial Inclusion Summit and Business Mixer"!

The focus of Representative Wheatley's event is to highlight the need to create a fair, open environment and to improve business practices for businesses owned by women, minorities,

people of color, the disadvantaged, and veterans throughout the state.

Lunch will be provided for those in attendance. Following the luncheon, Representative Wheatley will recognize attendees and select business leaders on the House floor before providing training opportunities featuring the **Department of General Services, Cathy Onyeadu** from the **Pennsylvania Minority Business Development Authority**, and **Brian Hudson, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA)**. PHFA is the primary funder for affordable housing development, and also offers new market tax credits for commercial development.

Workshop topics will cover the MWDBE certification process, accessing the portal system, and best practices for doing business with the Commonwealth. Workshops run until 3:00 PM.

The Hill CDC works in partnership with residents and stakeholders to create, promote, and implement strategies and programs that connect plans, policies and people to drive compelling community development opportunities in the Greater Hill District.

The Hill CDC understands the connection between a thriving community and a viable business presence. The organization provides resources to attract, retain, and expand new and existing Hill District businesses. As part of its work, the organization offers business support programming to small businesses and entrepreneurs who envision a vibrant future in the Hill District. Current partners include **Chatham University's Women's Business Center**, the **University of Pittsburgh's Small Business Development Center**, **Allegheny County MW/DBE Program**, and **Paramount Co-Op** to provide low-cost, high quality business support programs in the Hill District.

Leeretta Payne, owner of **Legacy Café**, is a Hill CDC program alumna. "As a small business owner, trying to grasp many aspects of business can be daunting. The Hill CDC sponsored a small business loan for me from Kiva. The Hill CDC continues to be instrumental in helping Legacy Café. Their staff is always there to help with resources and guidance and our community absolutely depends on the Hill CDC. What a gem!"

While enjoying the events of the day, the Hill CDC delegation will also be advocating for support of Hill District development projects. The organization submitted application for state funding for New Granada Square, a mixed-use project including 50 mixed-income apartments and 7.5K square feet of retail. The project is anchored by the historic New Granada Theater which is scheduled to open for interim re-use this summer. Construction on the Theater will begin this month. The Hill CDC awaits a decision for a 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) award from PHFA. This is the second submission made to the Agency.

"We believe the time is ripe to invest in the heart of the Hill District. The New Granada Square project offers the greatest potential for neighborhood transformation -- it will enliven our

business district, offer quality housing and celebrate art and culture. It's our time!" says Marimba Milliones, President & CEO of the Hill CDC

In addition to visiting representatives of the State of Pennsylvania; in April, the Hill CDC will visit the nation's capital in Washington, D.C. to advocate for the Hill District and reinvestment into our nation's most challenged neighborhoods with the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC). Milliones says, "Community development is complex and requires advocacy on many levels, including the local, state, and federal. When you're trying to rebuild a neighborhood, as we are, you go wherever necessary to achieve results."