



LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Unfavorable

**House Bill 722—Labor and Employment--Occupational
Safety and Health--Heat Stress Standards
House Economic Matters Committee**

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 4,500 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees and families.

House Bill 722 would require the Maryland Commissioner of Labor and Industry to adopt regulations that include a standard establishing heat stress levels for employees that, if exceeded, triggers action to protect employees from heat-related illness. Further, the bill requires employers to develop, implement and maintain a heat-related illness prevention plan for employees tailored to address hazards specific to the place of employment.

In February 2016, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) published [Criteria for a Recommended Standard: Occupational Exposure to Heat and Hot Environments](#), a technical resource on heat stress, heat-related illness signs and symptoms, and heat programs. Heat-related illness prevention programs are referenced in this chapter of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Technical Manual.

OSHA and NIOSH, two federal agencies specializing in workplace safety, have addressed and maintain oversight of heat stress and heat-related illness in the workplace. This includes issuing recommendations and guidance without mandates. For this reason, the Chamber believes that this legislation may be duplicative, and that Maryland should follow the lead laid out by the federal government. Further, we believe it more appropriate for Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) to launch and promote an educational campaign relative to heat stress and heat-related illness for employers, rather than issuing an employer mandate.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **Unfavorable Report** on HB 722.

