

February 11, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building,
3 East Wing 11 Bladen St.,
Annapolis, MD, 21401

RE: Opposition to SB 486 (Labor and Employment – Employment Standards During an Emergency Maryland Essential Workers’ Protection Act)

Dear Chairwoman Kelley:

The Maryland Building Industry Association, representing 1,100 member firms statewide, appreciates the opportunity to participate in the **SB 486 Labor and Employment – Employment Standards During an Emergency Maryland Essential Workers’ Protection Act**. MBIA **Opposes** the Act in its current version.

This bill would allow for the Emergency Management Agency to declare an emergency for essential workers and require employers to implement emergency measures.

MBIA opposes this measure due to the one size fits all nature of the bill. The emergency management agency does not have the resources to accurately assess every potential emergency nor the expertise to be able to impose realistic measures that would curb the emergency better than management of the project could. Additionally, this measure forces inconsistent evaluation of whether an emergency has occurred potentially after the fact and the period in which taking emergency measures may no longer be necessary or advisable.

Additionally, different job sites and positions have different requirements when it comes to safety protocols. MBIA is very concerned that this bill will, with the best of intentions, impose costs on businesses for protective equipment that may not be necessary for individual sites because the site is not evaluated, and its own unique needs are not met. This drains resources from the management staff that can impose protective measures that are valuable to that site.

For these reasons, MBIA respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

For more information about this position, please contact Lori Graf at 410-800-7327 or lgraf@marylandbuilders.org.

cc: Members of the Senate Finance Committee