



LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Unfavorable

Senate Bill 848

Maryland Wage Protection Act

Senate Finance Committee

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Dear Chairwoman Kelley 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 5,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic recovery and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

As introduced, SB 848 presents multiple areas of concern for the employer community. This legislation would open new avenues for suit on the employer community while also placing an undue burden of proof requirement on the employer in allegations relating to adverse employee actions.

There are additional concerns with new definitions outlined in this bill, such as the addition of work hour or schedule reductions that are "less favorable to the employee" as an item which qualifies as an adverse action taken on an employee. This new addition, coupled with the new burden of proof requirement, makes a common business practice such as schedule adjustments an adverse action which is interpreted as retaliatory against an employee for an allegation which may not have even been made.

SB 848 would also allow another employee, who may be unaffiliated with an event leading to a discriminatory allegation, the right to bring a complaint against an employer on behalf of another employee.

This legislation creates additional uncertainty in Maryland's business environment. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **Unfavorable Report** on **Senate Bill 848**.