



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 8, 2022

Committee: Senate Finance

Bill: _____ SB 10 – Workers' Compensation – COVID-19 Occupational Disease
Presumption

Position: Oppose

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League opposes Senate Bill 10, a retroactive bill which would establish an occupational disease presumption for a first responder, public safety employee, or health care worker who tests positive with COVID-19.

This proposed presumption that these workers should be compensated by the employer, even if there is no supporting evidence for an actual workplace exposure that caused the illness, will be nearly impossible to rebut. The employer would need to provide evidence that the employee contracted COVID-19 outside of the workplace; an employer cannot be expected to have access to this information.

Additionally, the bill's retroactive provision could result in an influx of claims against local governments. Two years is a significant period, and several variants of COVID-19 were highly contagious, resulting in literally hundreds of thousands of infections. The likelihood that a local government employee named in this bill contracted COVID-19 is high because the likelihood of most Maryland citizens contracting COVID-19 is high. Opening the door to significant difficult-to-prove but difficult-to-rebut litigation will be overly burdensome for local governments.

As such, the League respectfully requests that this committee provide Senate Bill 10 with an unfavorable report.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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