



Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce

410-213-0144 | info@oceancity.org
oceancity.org | 12320 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, MD 21842

TESTIMONY OFFERED ON BEHALF OF THE GREATER OCEAN CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

IN OPPOSITION TO:

HB0205 – Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act of 2024

Before:

Economic Matter Committee

Hearing: 2/14/24 at 1:00 PM

The Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, representing over 700 regional businesses and job creators, **STRONGLY OPPOSES** House Bill HB0205 – Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act of 2024.

This bill would raise the taxable wage base from \$8,500 to ~\$17,000, phased through 2027, then pegs the wage base at 25% of the average annual way, ostensibly **doubling the Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax burden on all Maryland businesses.** The Maryland Department of Labor states the UI Trust Fund Reserve has a solvency problem, which would make raising the taxable wage base make sense, but this bill also raises the minimum and maximum weekly benefit amounts and pegs the maximum benefit to inflation, while also making it a factor of the State's average weekly wage. Essentially, **this bill would disincentivize those on unemployment to seek employment,** paying at rates above our neighboring States' levels. It is for these reasons; we ask for the defeat of this measure.

The Ocean City Chamber respectfully requests an **UNFAVORABLE COMMITTEE REPORT on HB0205.** Please feel free to contact the Chamber directly at 410-213-0144, or Dennis F. Rasmussen, df@rasmussengrp.net at 410-303-4658, should you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Thompson

Executive Director

amy@oceancity.org

Joe Schanno

Legislative Committee Chair

joe.schanno@gmail.com