



7833 Walker Drive, Suite 400
Greenbelt, MD 20770
301.446.0002 • Fax: 301.446.0018
www.smacnaatl.org


February 9, 2024

HB-502 Public Safety – Fire Dampers, Smoke Dampers, Combination Fire Smoke Dampers and Smoke Control Systems

I ask for a favorable vote on HB-502

Chairman Korman and Committee members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of the Sheet Metal Contractors National Association; Mid-Atlantic Chapter, I write today to express our strong support for House Bill 502, establishing requirements for the installation, inspection, and testing of fire dampers and associated smoke control systems for the welfare and public safety of Maryland buildings and structures. These systems and equipment represent Fire, Life & Safety (FLS).

SMACNA Mid-Atlantic represents 22 construction firms, nearly 1,100 skilled professionals, and dozens of future professionals within the 5-year apprenticeship program. SMACNA Mid-Atlantic is an association of premier construction specialty contractors who utilize the latest technology and complete work to the highest standards per SMACNA technical standards and manuals widely respected across the United States and Canada.

Years ago, I was the senior engineering officer on a Navy warship and an engineering instructor for the Navy. From textbooks to real world events, fire and smoke can cripple a billion-dollar warship like no other. Buildings in Maryland are no different.

SMACNA Mid-Atlantic contractors and the association most favorably support House Bill 502 as a critical need to fill a present void of structured and preventative maintenance of fire dampers and associated smoke control sub-systems. Presently, other states already have (FLS) legislation in place. House Bill 502 would begin the process to bring Maryland in concert with multiple National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

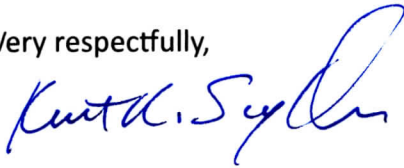
Most importantly, House Bill 502 is an investment into public safety and welfare for all Marylanders.

Our association has the certified and technically trained workforce to conduct the detailed troubleshooting, inspection, repair and follow-on preventative maintenance to FLS equipment.

According to a FEMA study in 2020, nearly 65% of counties, cities, and towns across the United States lack modern building codes. If FLS systems are not addressed, we are empowering smoke as both the labyrinth and the Minotaur. Our citizens deserve safe buildings with updated FLS legislation to support these measures.

Please consider a favorable report for this critical bill ensuring safety for all.

Very respectfully,



Kurt R. Snyder
Executive Director
SMACNA Mid-Atlantic