



SHEET METAL AND AIR CONDITIONING CONTRACTORS' NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

February 08, 2024

HB0502 – Public Safety – Fire Dampers, Smoke Dampers, Combination Fire Smoke Dampers, and Smoke Control Systems

Chair Kroman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding HB0502.

I am in support of this bill.

My name is Geoff Parks, Sr. Project Manager for the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors' Association (SMACNA), an international trade association representing signatory contracting firms across the country. I've been in the sheet metal HVAC industry for nearly 30 years.

Supporting the industry in my current role at SMACNA includes providing training on the proper installation of Fire Life Safety Dampers. I'm also a former Maryland HVAC contractor that employed certified Fire and Smoke Damper Technicians who performed damper acceptance and inspection testing on many buildings throughout the region and can attest firsthand to the pervasive issues with Fire Life Safety dampers as documented in a 2021 University of Maryland reliability study.

On many occasions, dampers were installed incorrectly, had no or limited access, broken fusible links, debris blocking damper blade function, broken damper shafts, inoperable actuators, and the list goes on. Resulting in the need to repair or replace the dampers completely.

As previously stated, I am in full support of this bill and ask for a favorable report.

Passing HB0502 will make Maryland buildings safer for the occupants and help to prevent future tragedies and possible loss of life.

Sincerely,

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