



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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HB 244 - Maryland Occupational Safety and Health Act - Civil Penalties - Alterations
House Economic Matters Committee
January 24, 2024

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 244. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 300,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

Strong penalties for violations of Maryland's occupational safety rules deter businesses from ignoring worker's safety issues. Maryland's Division of Labor and Industry are tasked with administering the state's Occupational Safety and Health program. Under the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act Section 18, it requires that, "State-run safety and health programs must be at least as effective (ALAE) as the federal OSHA program." Under the Federal Civil Penalties Inflation Adjustment Act Improvements Act of 2015, maximum Federal OSHA penalties were \$16,131 on January 1, 2024. HB 244 increases the penalties to nearly match the Federal penalties and then ties them to consumer price index adjustments in the future.

We urge a favorable report for HB 244.