



House Bill 591

Date: April 1, 2025

Committee: Senate Judicial Proceedings

Position: Unfavorable

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce (Maryland Chamber) is a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and opportunity for all Marylanders.

As introduced, House Bill 591 (HB 591) seeks to increase the statute of limitations for prosecuting or enforcing of local consumer protection codes from one year to three years, with the time frame beginning from when local authorities knew or should have reasonably known of a violation.

Extending the statute of limitations, particularly with the clock starting upon local authorities' awareness of the violation, would lead to prolonged uncertainty for both individuals and businesses, potentially subjecting them to criminal liability for alleged actions that occurred much longer than 3 years in the past.

We urge the committee to revert the language to the original version of HB 549 from 2024 as introduced and prior to its amendment. Specifically, we recommend striking the language on page 1, lines 18 and 19 ("local authorities knew or reasonable should have known of the violation") and replacing it with "after the offense was committed".

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges an **unfavorable report** on **HB 591**.