



17 February 2026

Chairperson Melissa Wells  
Government, Labor and Elections Committee  
142 Lowe House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: Testimony in Support of HB1016**

Dear Chairperson Wells:

I am writing in support of the limited non-compete reform bill, HB1016, currently before the Maryland General Assembly.

As you may know, Maryland's existing non-compete protections apply only to certain medical professionals, veterinarians, and individuals earning approximately \$50,000 or less. This gap is becoming a significant concern within the construction industry, where consolidation by out-of-state entities is constraining opportunities for local professionals and tradespeople, reducing the available contractor pool—particularly in the architecture, civil engineering, plumbing, and HVAC professions—and ultimately increasing the cost of building across the state. Many affected workers are also unable to speak publicly due to nondisclosure agreements layered on top of non-compete provisions.

HB1016/SB900 would promote economic freedom for Maryland workers, reward employers who maintain jobs and operations within the state, and strengthen Maryland's innovation economy. The legislation helps retain skilled workers and professional talent within Maryland rather than forcing relocation or unemployment. It prevents out-of-state entities from restricting Maryland workers' ability to pursue comparable employment or establish competing local businesses, encourages fair competition, supports small-business formation, and benefits consumers through increased choice and competitive pricing.

Importantly, the bill does not restrict Maryland-based employers from using reasonable non-compete agreements. Instead, it applies only in circumstances where out-of-state control limits the economic mobility and opportunity of those living, working, and investing in Maryland. In doing so, HB1016 strengthens workforce protections while promoting long-term economic growth and positioning Maryland as a welcoming destination for entrepreneurs constrained by overly restrictive non-compete agreements elsewhere.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further, provide background materials, or share additional perspective on how this issue is affecting the design and construction community. I can be reached by reply email or at (301) 807-0233.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. O'Looney".

Brian E. O'Looney, AIA  
Founder