



**MARYLAND**  
Chamber of Commerce

**LEGISLATIVE POSITION:**

**Unfavorable**

**House Bill 1097**

**Maryland Wage Protection Act**

**House Economic Matters Committee**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020**

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 4,500 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth for Maryland businesses, employees and families.

As introduced, House Bill 1097 presents multiple areas of concern for the employer community. This legislation would open new avenues for suit on the employer community while also placing an undue burden of proof requirement on the employer in allegations relating to adverse employee actions.

There are additional concerns with new definitions outlined in this bill, such as the addition of work hour or schedule reductions that are "less favorable to the employee" as an item which qualifies as an adverse action taken on an employee. This new addition, coupled with the new burden of proof requirement, makes a common business practice such as schedule adjustments an adverse action which is interpreted as retaliatory against an employee for an allegation which may not have even been made.

HB 1097 would also allow another employee, who may be unaffiliated with an event leading to a discriminatory allegation, the right to bring a complaint against an employer on behalf of another employee.

This legislation creates additional uncertainty in Maryland's business environment. For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **Unfavorable Report** on **House Bill 1097**.

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