



Senate Bill 62 – Secure Maryland Wage Act

Committee: Senate Finance Committee
Senator Delores G. Kelley, Chair

Position: SUPPORT

Date: February 3, 2020

Dear Senator Kelley (Chair) and fellow Committee Members,

I am Father Ty Hullinger, Pastor of St. Anthony of Padua, Most Precious Blood and St. Dominic Roman Catholic Churches in Baltimore City, and I want to express my strong support for **Senate Bill 62, the Secure Maryland Wage Act**. This important bill can be our opportunity to ensure that workers at Maryland's sensitive and secure transportation facilities like BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, Penn Station and the Port of Baltimore, are able to focus fully on keeping the public safe without having to worry about how to provide for the basic needs of their families. When workers are paid a just wage, it not only helps them provide for their needs, but it also helps to build social and community capital as workers spend locally.

Maryland's diverse faith traditions share a common teaching about workers: **every worker has a fundamental human right to receive a just and living wage for their labor**. We believe that the words of Deuteronomy speak this truth clearly:

You shall not withhold the wages of your workers, because their livelihood depends upon them (Deuteronomy 25:14-15).

Catholic social teaching tradition defines a just wage as a wage that allows for a worker to meet all of the basic human needs of her or his family; including food, clothing, shelter, education, medical care, as well as the opportunity to save for retirement. I have seen first-hand how working families in Baltimore struggle with daily anxieties and worries about how they are going to meet these basic family needs. They must often seek a second job which in turn places even more stress and anxiety upon them and their families. Workers at sensitive sites shouldn't be unduly burdened by these anxieties. This bill will help correct the injustices and help relieve the burdens that afflict the working families in our local community.

The Secure Maryland Wage Act will help to make our communities safer by ensuring the well-being of the very workers who daily labor to make us safe in our travels to and from Maryland. Our workers need your support of this important legislation and I urge a favorable report for Senate Bill 62, the Secure Maryland Wage Act. Thank you for your consideration of this very important matter.