



HB 64
Labor and Employment – Occupational Safety and Health – Handwashing
Facilities on Construction Sites
Economic Matters Committee
Position: Favorable with amendment

Maryland AGC, the Maryland Chapter of the Associated General Contractors of America, provides professional education, business development, and advocacy for commercial construction companies and vendors, both open shop and union. AGC of America is the nation’s largest and oldest trade association for the construction industry. AGC of America represents more than 26,000 firms, including over 6,500 of America’s leading general contractors, and over 9,000 specialty-contracting firms, all through a nationwide network of chapters. Maryland AGC respectfully urges HB 64 be amended as set forth below and, as amended, be given a favorable report.

HB 64 would require employers operating construction sites in the State to provide an adequate handwashing facility on the construction sites; require that the handwashing facilities include potable water, be in an accessible location, be adequate for the number of workers, and be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition; and require employers to allow workers on the construction sites to have reasonable access to the handwashing facilities during the workday.

On its face, HB 64 seems reasonable, and it is, with one exception. The bill does not define “construction site” nor put any floor on the number of employees at a site that would trigger its application. It is not reasonable or feasible to provide the required handwashing facility on a small job site. It is very common in the construction industry for a small job to require only a few employees and a few days or less to perform the necessary work. Small job sites also are constrained in having a location suitable for a handwashing station. Moreover, many construction workers keep a small hand sanitizer with their tool kits or vehicles. This allows them to clean their hands both for simple sanitation and as a protection against COVID-19 and other possible infections. While the cost of a small handwashing station is not prohibitive – around \$200 per month is typical – it is a logistical and cash expense that should not be required on small job sites.

Accordingly, the bill should be amended to set an employee floor above which a handwashing station should be provided. An informal survey of Maryland AGC member companies led to a recommendation of 10 employees or more at a job site as a threshold for requiring a handwashing station.

Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, Maryland AGC respectfully urges HB 64 be amended to set a floor of 10 or more employees on a job site as threshold to trigger the requirement for a handwashing station, and, as amended, be given a favorable report.

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