



**Dough Roller Restaurants**

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February 3, 2021

Maryland House of Representatives

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to **adamantly oppose** House Bill 581 (Maryland Essential Worker Protection Act). As the founder of The Dough Roller Restaurants, Breakers Hotel & several other local businesses, this bill would be a death sentence for our 40+ year Ocean City businesses.

In the uncertainty of 2020, we hired at higher-than-normal rates and provided many benefits to our employees to show them our concern and express our appreciation in their continued support of our businesses. We would not have been able to survive without them and the Federal, State, and local support offered through PPP loans, SBA EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster loans) and various grants that we were able to apply to receive. This Spring, the repayment of some of these loans begins, adding to our current debt service.

**If we are forced to pay "essential" employees an additional \$3.00 per hour in hazard pay dating back to March, the start of the State of Emergency, we would have to sell our business and close our doors!** Even more concerning is the definition of essential employees. Our employees were permitted to travel to their jobs in restaurants, during the Lockdown, since they were considered "Essential". This would total over \$1,000,000.00 to our businesses that are already struggling with a global pandemic, compounding financial obligations, and decrease capacity in these same businesses.

Maryland employers cannot reasonably be expected to comply with the new regulations proposed by House Bill 581, especially with the already increased minimum wage and paid safe and sick leave required of all employers. We currently offer a very generous health insurance package to the employees that qualify and are proud of the benefits we have been able to provide. Any increase in our current responsibility would devastate us.

In closing, I urge you to consider the repercussion of House Bill 581. Many Maryland businesses will be forced to close, especially in Worcester County, and this would in turn, devastate the Tourism Industry that we have all worked tirelessly to Promote. I appreciate your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

William A. Gibbs, Jr.

Julianne Gibbs

Jeffrey Ryan Gibbs

Kevin Thomas Gibbs