



List of Endorsers for House Bill 577

Presented before the House Economic Matters Committee

February 2, 2021

The undersigned sixty-seven labor, immigrant, justice, environmental and other groups, have signed onto a form (attached), endorsing House Bill 577, among other legislative priorities for the Marylanders for Food & Farmworker Protection coalition.

1199SEIU	Maryland Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Abibinsroma Foundation	Maryland Conservation Council
Alabama State Association of Cooperatives	Maryland Legislative Coalition
Assateague Coastal Trust	Maryland Pesticide Education Network
Better Food Foundation	Maryland Public Health Association
Brighter Green	Maryland Sierra Club
CATA Farmworkers Support Committee	Maryland United for Peace and Justice
Center for Biological Diversity	McDaniel Honey Farm
Center for Progressive Reform	MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Center for Worker Justice Of Eastern Iowa	Migrant Clinicians Network
Central Maryland Beekeepers Assoc.	MLC Climate Justice Wing
Centro de los Derechos del Migrante	National Council of Jewish Women Los Angeles
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility	National Employment Law Project
Clean Water Action	National Immigration Law Center
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOS	National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association
Cottingham Farm	Organizer/Immigration Caseworker
DC Greens	ProVeg International
Encompass	Public Citizen
Factory Farming Awareness Coalition	Public Justice
Fair Farms	Public Justice Center
Farm Forward	Safe Skies Maryland
Farm Sanctuary	Smart on Pesticides Coalition
Farmworker Justice	Socially Responsible Agriculture Project
Food & Water Watch	Sunrise Movement Baltimore
Food Animal Concerns Trust	The Greenbaum Foundation
Food Chain Workers Alliance	The Humane League
Friends of the Earth	Toxic Free NC
Global Justice Ecology Project	Voters For Animal Rights
Government Accountability Project	Waterkeepers Chesapeake
Greenpeace USA	WISE
Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor Food Alliance	Workers Center of Central NY
Indivisible Howard County	Workplace Fairness
Jewish Initiative for Animals (JIFA)	
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future	
Main Street Vegan Academy	

Endorse Legislation to Protect Maryland's Food and Farmworkers in the 2021 General Assembly Session

The coalition Marylanders for Food and Farmworker Protection (MFFWP) formed in response to the unsafe and unhealthy conditions faced by farm, seafood, and poultry workers in Maryland during COVID-19. Often left behind, food and farmworkers are essential workers that have been treated as expendable by the corporations that employ them and the Hogan Administration that has failed to adequately protect them.

Several pieces of state legislation have been - or soon will be - introduced in the Maryland General Assembly to protect these and other workers. Please endorse these bills from your organization.

1) Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) from Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) - HB 124

Workers across the state - including food and farmworkers - have shared horrific stories of having inadequate PPE, no opportunity to social distance, being required to come to work even with COVID-19 symptoms, and facing retaliation for requesting COVID-19 protections. More than a dozen states, including Virginia, have issued Emergency Temporary Standards or other emergency regulations to adopt comprehensive and enforceable worker health protections. Governor Hogan, despite being urged to over the summer by dozens of organizations and workers and the Democratic members of Maryland's Congressional delegation, has refused to issue mandatory workplace protections, leaving workers with no recourse. This legislation will compel MOSH to issue an ETS right away and develop a permanent aerosol transmissible disease standard so that workers have protections that will be enacted immediately in future pandemics. *Note that this MOSH provision from HB 124 will also appear in the Maryland Essential Workers Protection Act sponsored by Chairman Davis and Senator Augustine.

FACT SHEET:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1djm9ovnWnOJA2Ae4RB23iJED5oKduQdi/view?usp=sharing>

2) Healthy Farmworkers Act - (Bill Number TBD) - This bill would ensure that all Maryland workers provided with workplace housing are guaranteed safe and healthful living conditions regardless of their immigration or visa status. Workers in Maryland's agricultural and meat processing industries are primarily H-2 and migrant workers who are highly vulnerable to COVID-19 because their employers have not provided

adequate workplace and housing protections. Among the problems plaguing workers in this industry, their employers often transport them to work in crowded vehicles and provide shoddy housing that forces workers to sleep in crowded bunks and barracks. Under some circumstances, these living conditions are not only inhumane but create a high-risk environment for COVID-19 illness. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Labor to develop consistent workplace housing guidelines for employers, require employers to develop plans for complying with those guidelines, and follow up on compliance by conducting inspections of employer-provided housing.

FACT SHEET:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mJLUJF-XDqAeLtkj_flidVnHK4jyyWJZibYIcQUyauU/edit?usp=sharing

3) Maryland Healthy Working Families Act Expansion (Bill Number TBD) - The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed painful structural weaknesses in our nation and state. One of these is the lack of sufficient paid sick leave for Maryland workers during public health crises. Workers are the backbone of our economy and fuel our businesses, and they must be front and center in conversations regarding how to weather this crisis. This bill will expand Maryland's current sick leave law (the Healthy Working Families Act) to provide adequate leave during public health emergencies and to cover those workers, including agricultural workers, who have been historically excluded. The bill is critical to ensuring Maryland effectively fights the COVID-19 pandemic by allowing all workers sufficient paid leave to quarantine or recover during public health emergencies. It will also ensure, in conformity with the original intent of the Act, that workers will not be forced to choose between spreading a deadly virus and a paycheck.

INFOGRAPHIC:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ylyelsAJ1saK3Lgu7yimSB60_paRxavy/view?usp=sharing

Marylanders for Food and Farmworker Protection is also supporting the Maryland Essential Workers Protection Act, which the sponsors plan to amend to reflect the ETS provision in HB 124. Please visit <http://protectmdworkers.org/sign-on/> to endorse the MEWPA.

Questions? Email cwaterman@foe.org