



WMDA/CAR Service Station
and Automotive Repair Association

February 3, 2021

Chairman: Dereck E. Davis
Members of Economics Matters Committee

RE: HB 581 Maryland Essential Workers Protection Act

Position: Unfavorable

HB 581 puts owners of essential businesses in a difficult position during a declared emergency. The independent small businesses that I represent lost up to 75% of their business when COVID 19 was declared an emergency. Currently most are still off 25% over 2020. Most have still stayed open normal hours, with a good portion being 24/7.

If this bill were to pass, they would have no choice:

- Shut their doors during declared emergencies.
- Operate with a skeleton crew and cut hours of operation.

Neither choice would be preferred but would be a reality. If the emergency lasted as long as our current emergency, a business might not survive with any of the above choices.

During emergencies, a business is extremely limited in raising prices with Maryland Gouging Law in effect.

Please give HB581 an unfavorable report

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