



Testimony in Support of HB 581
Maryland Essential Workers' Protection Act
February 5, 2021

To: Hon. Dereck Davis, Chair, and members of the House Economic Matters Committee
From: Shannon Opfer, President CWA Local 2107, President CWA MD State Council


Chair Davis and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

As a Union, CWA represents telecommunications workers of all kinds. We represent Verizon employees who maintain and create the network of fiber optics that give people their phone lines and internet. We also represent AT&T employees in stores around the state selling cell phones and equipment that is necessary in today's society. When a State of Emergency is called in Maryland, we respond. We are there to clear phone lines off roads after snow tears them down. We are there to provide excellent service for your cell phones when you drop them in a puddle. We don't have the option to stay home because we are essential. We have a union to help protect us, but not all essential workers do.

HB 581 would provide safe and hygienic working conditions. It would give essential employees the right to refuse dangerous work. It would offer hazard pay and healthcare assistance to essential workers who are not given those things already. Emergency Action plans would be required of all employers.

In closing, HB 581 is important to keep the essential workers who have stepped up to serve our state during this pandemic some assurances to make their lives better. CWA is in SUPPORT of this bill.

Thank you,


Shannon Opfer

President CWA MD and DC State Council
President CWA Local 2107