



February 5, 2021

The Honorable Dereck Davis and Members
Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: OPPOSE – HB 581 – Labor and Employment - Employment Standards During an Emergency
(Maryland Essential Workers' Protection Act)**

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland School Bus Contractors Association (MSBCA) opposes HB 581 – Labor and Employment - Employment Standards During an Emergency. MSBCA serves as the voice of the private school bus companies that contract with local Maryland school systems in 18 of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions to own and operate the nearly 3500 contracted school buses that transport schoolchildren across the State. MSBCA remains committed to the safety of the students they transport and considers it a privilege to do so.

The costs of HB 581 would be devastating to Maryland businesses, which are already struggling with the implications, economic and otherwise, of a global pandemic. Maryland employers cannot possibly comply with the extremely broad and burdensome mandates contained the bill, especially as they struggle to overcome the financial and operational implications of COVID-19.

As school bus contractors, our operations came to a standstill last March when schools shut down. Most of them remain closed to this day and we are only beginning to see some counties reopen schools. Many of our member companies are only receiving a fraction of their contractual compensation and yet still have to pay for and maintain their buses, be it several buses or large fleets. Most of us are small, family-owned businesses, not large businesses who may have reserve funds to help them through this difficult time.

Now is not the time to implement new, costly, and complex employer mandates as Maryland's job creators struggle to overcome the implications of a global pandemic.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to our State.

Sincerely,

Steve Nelson

Steve Nelson, President
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410.268.3099

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