



LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

UNFAVORABLE

House Bill 124

**Occupational Safety and Health Standards to Protect Employees -
Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and COVID-19
House Economic Matters Committee**

Thursday, January 28, 2021

Dear Chairman Davis and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 5,000 members and federated partners, and we work to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic recovery and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 124 would require the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to adopt regulations that establish a permanent occupational safety and health standard to protect employees from occupational exposure to aerosol transmissible diseases. It requires the Commissioner to adopt said regulations on or before October 1, 2021.

The Chamber has been made aware that there is an effort under way at the federal level to address many of the issues outlined in this bill. As well, there are a number of other pieces of legislation making their way through the state legislative process, including the comprehensive Essential Worker Protection Act (HB 581), that address workplace safety regulations. Because of the complexity of this issue, and its intersection with federal law, the Chamber looks forward to working with stakeholders on policy outcomes that balance employee protections with the operational realities of our members.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on House Bill 124.