



February 3, 2021

**To: The Eastern Shore Legislative Delegation**

Dear Friends,

HB 581 and its companion measure in the Senate poses a huge threat to not only my company but also countless other small and large businesses here on the Shore. I urge your most vigorous opposition to it.

My company produces pellets and firewood for energy, wood chips for heat and power at ECI and pine shavings critical for the continued operation of our poultry industry. In recognition of our critical mission, Governor Hogan last spring identified us as “essential” and we have continued to play a key role in keeping Marylanders fed, warm and employed. Now, this bill would punish us by requiring a retroactive wage adjustment of about \$5,000 per employee among other costly measures. It would immediately cost my company at least \$1 million.

We’re just beginning a major expansion in our Salisbury and Pocomoke City operations. The costs of this bill would not only prevent a significant part of that expansion but also makes me question the wisdom of continued business investments in Maryland. I’m sure you will hear similar sentiments from other business leaders.

I hope you will help your colleagues in the Legislature better understand the huge impacts of this ill-founded proposal and work for its defeat.

Thank you and please don’t hesitate to call me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

*Tom Johnson*

Tom Johnson,  
President

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