



HEARING DATE: February 9, 2021

BILL NO/TITLE: Labor and Employment - Employment Standards During an Emergency (Maryland Essential Workers' Protection Act)

COMMITTEE: Economic Matters/Appropriations

POSITION: **Oppose**

The Maryland motorcoach industry is vital to Maryland providing essential transportation services connecting rural communities, relieving congestion in urban centers with commuter operations, transporting children to school and educational events, and serving as the only means of transportation for travelers on fixed incomes or without cars. We also play a key role in emergency and defense planning. In times of hurricanes and other natural disasters, motorcoaches are a critical to helping evacuate residents, particularly senior citizens. We constantly support our U.S. military by moving troops and their equipment for deployments and training around the country, similar to what we did at the recent inauguration of our 46th president, and our industry plays a direct role in defending the U.S. Capitol and Maryland.

Motorcoaches are essential to Maryland's transportation, supporting the students, military, commuters and residents alike. Now more than ever, the flexibility and reliability of our services should be protected. As we witnessed at the onset of the pandemic private motorcoach carriers' services came to an abrupt halt and their wheel's stopped rolling decreasing their annual revenue by almost 95%. We need to roll again to remain in business.

Now is not the time to implement new, costly and complex employer mandates. If passed, the bill would create a number of onerous requirements for our members.

MMA is also concerned because the definitions of; Requiring an essential employer to give a written statement regarding certain hazard pay paid to certain essential workers at certain intervals; requiring an essential employer to take certain actions related to occupational safety and health during an emergency; authorizing an essential worker to refuse to fulfill a certain responsibility under certain circumstances; prohibiting an essential employer from retaliating or taking other adverse action against an essential worker or other worker for certain actions; etc. again would be almost impossible for our members based on the type of work their employees perform.

The additional administrative costs of this bill would be devastating to our members, who are already struggling with a global pandemic and compounding financial implications of other state mandates like increased minimum wage and paid sick and safe leave. MMA Members cannot reasonably be expected to comply with the broad and unwell defined mandates contained within House Bill 0685/Senate Bill 0107, especially when they continue to overcome the operational and economic implications of COVID-19.

We need to count on you to oppose this dangerous legislation and protect us as Maryland Small Business.

About Maryland Motorcoach Association(MMA): MMA represents the interests of the Privately Owned Maryland Motorcoach Operators across the state and industry together with our tourism partners, destination marketing organizations, small businesses, coach manufacturers, and equipment suppliers all of whom are counted among our members we strive to promote the efficient and secure transportation of Marylanders across the state and throughout the country transporting students, seniors, military, church groups, commuters, and a multitude of other Marylanders as they go about their day to day business of working and enjoying life in Maryland.

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