



MTBMA
MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION BUILDERS
AND MATERIALS ASSOCIATION

March 2nd, 2021

Delegate Dereck E. Davis, Chair
Economic Matters Committee
231 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: HB 1199 – UNFAVORABLE – Workers’ Compensation – Occupational Disease
Presumptions – COVID-19**

Dear Chairman Davis and Committee Members:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials.

While we are extremely sympathetic to the plight of the COVID-19 pandemic, this bill is far-reaching and promotes bad public policy. HB 1199 would create a presumption that any employee who works in education, healthcare, child care, or is deemed essential who contracts COVID-19 did so in the course of employment. COVID-19 is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can be contracted anywhere at any time, even while adhering to proper CDC guidelines. To assume that an employee contracted the virus at work simply based on their job description is a matter of bad public policy. The safety of our employees is and has been our utmost concern since this pandemic started. We follow and enforce all recommended safety guidelines while on the job site; however, we have no way to enforce those said guidelines when our employees are not working. Contract tracing is not always successful, so putting the onus on the employer to prove the employee did not contract COVID-19 at work is extremely burdensome, time consuming, and costly. Our business community has suffered immeasurable loses from this virus and we feel strongly that legislation such as this will only continue to hurt us.

We thank you for your time and consideration and ask for a UNFAVORABLE report on HB 1199.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association