



216 East Pulaski Highway
Elkton, Maryland 21921

Senate Bill 555

Fair Wage Act of 2023

LEGISLATIVE POSITION: Request Favorable With Amendment

March 1, 2023

Dear Chair Senator Melony Griffith and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of the Cecil County Chamber of Commerce and our over 400 member companies, I am writing to express our opposition to SB-555, which, if enacted without amendment, would create an enduring financial and staffing hardship on the businesses in Cecil County.

Of major concern are the features of the bill creating an automatic annual wage increase indexed to the consumer price index in the MD-DC-VA market. We believe auto-indexing of any kind takes a large degree of control away from our future legislators, and thus citizens in Maryland. Automatic indexing hinders the process of all citizens of our state to affect the outcome of the costs of their everyday life. This sentiment is expressed and reflected throughout the Fiscal and Policy Note for SB-555.

We ask for your recognition of the adverse effects of the indexing mechanism, and therefore the removal of this feature from SB-555, returning Maryland's minimum wage control to votes of the legislature as warranted. It is a matter of fairness and equity to the businesses of our state to have a full and timely analysis of market conditions executed before Maryland's minimum wage level is changed.

For the reasons noted above, we respectfully **request an amendment to remove the automatic CPI index adjustment provision.**

If you have the need for further clarification of the Chamber's position on SB-555, please contact Executive Director, Megan McRay, mmcray@cecilchamber.com or (410)392-3833.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.