



TO: House Judiciary Committee
FROM: Garrett County Chamber of Commerce
DATE: March 27, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE SENATE BILL 452** – Courts – Prohibited Liability Agreements –
Recreational Facilities

The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce is the largest professional business association in Garrett County with nearly 500 members representing every industry in the region. The Chamber was formed to organize, support, and represent Garrett County's business community in advancing common interests and promote our county's hospitality and recreation industries by attracting visitors through comprehensive marketing.

Senate Bill 452, as passed by the Senate, eliminates contract provisions that seek to protect small businesses from negligence claims. Instead, such provisions would be unenforceable in a court of law.

Garrett County prides itself on its tourism and recreational offerings for visitors and residents alike. Our businesses, in particular marinas on Deep Creek Lake, offer a variety of recreational activities that add to the economic vibrance of our community.

Our fear is that SB452 would expose these businesses to increased lawsuits and higher insurance premiums in order to protect themselves and still provide the entertainment residents and tourists have come to expect. Specifically, this bill seemingly moves *all* risk and responsibility away from the participant and on to the business.

This legislation will put Garrett County at a distinct disadvantage. For these reasons, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on **SB452**.

