



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 18, 2025

Committee: House Appropriations Committee

Bill: HB 176 - Labor and Employment - Occupational Safety and Health - Revisions (Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act)

Position: Unfavorable

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) respectfully opposes House Bill 176, which imposes several requirements on local governments for their fieldwork locations and institutes penalties for non-compliance. Municipal governments employ about 24,000 people with varying job descriptions, many of whom have fieldwork locations. While MML and its members support strong workplace safety provisions, some of the aspects of this bill are redundant with existing requirements or provide a mandate with which it is difficult to comply.

There are a few provisions that are of particular concern. On page 7, lines 18-25 and on page 13, lines 23-25 require municipal governments to provide certain documents to employees via email. This is problematic both from a compliance and efficacy perspective. There are several municipalities that do not have employer-issued email addresses for all employees which would make compliance difficult. In addition, employees are familiar with finding information on workplace safety posted in highly visible locations in the workplace as opposed to via email. This is important information for employees to know, but an amendment to add an option to place these documents at the workplace would make this section more palatable.

On page 15, lines 4-9 are reporting requirements placed on the municipal government employer. These are redundant to requirements already in place with Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) and could lead to confusion or noncompliance; these lines could be deleted.

While it is a serious problem to knowingly make a false representation about the safety aspects of a workplace, a proactive that is already prohibited, the new penalty provisions on page 15, lines 25-32 and page 16, lines 1-3 are harsh, particularly for an offense that has subjectivity to its premise. MML recommends a reduction in these penalties and establishing a more objective measure to determine noncompliance; such as failure to remedy the cause of a citation.



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For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 176. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you in advance for your consideration.