

# Journeyman Pipe Fitters and Apprentices



## Local Union No. 602

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AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO

Testimony of Chris Madello, Business Manager / Financial Secretary Treasurer

United Association (UA) Steamfitters Local 602

In Support of HB264 / SB218

House Economic Matters Committee and Senate Finance Committee

Chairs Wilson and Beidle, and honorary Members of the House Economic Matters Committee and Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of the United Association (UA) Steamfitters Local 602, I am honored to offer our strong support for House Bill 264 / Senate Bill 218. This legislation provides a necessary step forward in addressing workplace fraud and holding violators accountable, ensuring a level playing field for all workers and contractors in Maryland.

Local 602 represents thousands of highly skilled steamfitters, pipefitters, welders, and HVAC technicians who proudly serve our state's industries and communities. Our members work hard to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, safety, and integrity in their trades. Unfortunately, unscrupulous employers who engage in workplace fraud undermine these standards and harm law-abiding businesses and workers alike.

### **Why HB264 Matters to Maryland's Workforce**

Workplace fraud, including misclassification of employees as independent contractors, is a pervasive issue that deprives workers of essential protections such as fair wages, benefits, and workplace safety. It also creates unfair competition, placing honest contractors at a significant disadvantage.

HB264 / SB218 addresses this issue by:

1. **Requiring Commissioner Notifications:** When the Commissioner of Labor and Industry determines that a licensee has violated workplace fraud provisions, the bill mandates that the relevant licensing authority is notified. This ensures violations are not swept under the rug but are appropriately addressed.
2. **Suspension or Revocation of Licenses:** Licensing authorities will be required to suspend or revoke the licenses of repeat violators. This provision sends a strong message that workplace fraud will not be tolerated and incentivizes compliance with Maryland's labor laws.
3. **Establishing Appeal and Reinstatement Processes:** The bill provides a fair and transparent process for appeals and potential license reinstatement. This balance ensures due process while maintaining accountability.

### **Impact on Workers and Employers**

By implementing these measures, HB264 / SB218 will:

- Protect workers from exploitation and ensure they receive the wages, benefits, and protections they deserve.
- Level the playing field for law-abiding contractors, allowing them to compete fairly in the marketplace.
- Strengthen Maryland's economy by fostering a fair and just labor market that supports high-quality, union jobs.

### **Support for Workers and Union Jobs**

HB264 / SB218 aligns with Local 602's commitment to protecting the dignity and rights of all workers. We understand that a thriving labor market depends on upholding labor standards and ensuring accountability for those who violate them. This bill is a critical step toward achieving these goals and advancing worker protections in Maryland.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons, UA Steamfitters Local 602 urges a favorable report on HB264 / SB218. We thank Governor Moore, Secretary Wu and the Department of Labor for introducing this important legislation and the Committee for considering its merits. We stand ready to work with you to ensure Maryland continues to lead in promoting fair labor practices and supporting our hardworking men and women.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Respectfully,

*Christopher M. Madello*

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UA Steamfitters Local 602