



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

TESTIMONY

February 27, 2025

Committee: House Economic Matters Committee

Bill: HB 1413 - Labor and Employment - Employer Communications During Nonworking Hours - Right to Disconnect

Position: Unfavorable

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) opposes House Bill 1413. The bill requires employers to create a policy that establishes non-working hours and provides an employee right to ignore communications from their employer during those times, subject to some exemptions.

Municipal governments are fundamentally different than many employers in the private sector in that they provide essential services vital to public health, safety, and general well-being. Police officers, public works employees, wastewater treatment facility technicians, city managers, treasurers, and countless other municipal employees may have the need for communication with their municipal employer during non-working hours. The nature of the work in public service necessitates some level of flexibility in terms of scheduling and this bill is an instance of State overreach into local government affairs.

The exemption in subsection (E) appears to capture some of the prime instances involving public safety and health purposes that would require communication during non-working hours. However, the exemption does not cover all examples of when a municipal employee may be required to be responsive during non-working hours. A few examples include an economic development director needing to provide clarity on a budget item prior to a late-night council vote; or the Saturday of a special event a clerk may need to verify whether or not a disputed permit was properly approved. These are real incidents that are critical to the functioning of municipal governments but would not fall under the exemptions of subsection (E). An additional subsection after subsection (B) that would exempt local government employers from the provisions of the bill would mollify MML's concerns.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 1413. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you in advance for your consideration.