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February 27, 2025

TO: The Honorable C.T. Wilson
Chair, Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Adam Spangler
Legislative Aide, Legislative Affairs, Office of the Attorney General

RE: House Bill 1476 – Labor and Employment - Disclosure of Employee's
Immigration Status – Prohibition - **Support**

The Office of the Attorney General writes to express our support for **House Bill 1476**, which serves the crucial purpose in safeguarding the rights of immigrant workers in Maryland. This legislation not only protects vulnerable employees from exploitation but also recognizes the indispensable role that immigrant labor plays in our State's economy.

Maryland is home to a vibrant and diverse immigrant population, comprised of individuals who contribute significantly across various sectors, including agriculture, service industries, healthcare, and technology. In fact, immigrant workers account for 21% of the labor force, providing the backbone for many businesses and industries that keep our communities thriving.¹

However, it is concerning that despite their critical contributions, many immigrant workers face exploitation and fear retaliation due to their immigration status. **House Bill 1476** directly addresses this issue by preventing employers from disclosing or threatening to disclose an employee's immigration status, particularly as a means to hide violations of labor laws. By

¹ Comptroller Brooke Lierman Releases New Report on Immigration and Maryland's Economy. (2024, April 8). *Marylandtaxes.Gov*. Retrieved February 25, 2025, from <https://marylandtaxes.gov/media/2024/04-18-24-Comptroller-Releases-New-Report-on-Immigration-and-Economy.pdf>.

enacting this bill, we can foster a safer work environment where all employees can exercise their rights without fear of intimidation or harassment.

Furthermore, this legislation empowers the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to investigate complaints and impose penalties on employers who violate these protections. This not only provides necessary oversight but also holds employers accountable, promoting ethical practices within our workforce.

Supporting this bill aligns with our State's values of inclusivity, fairness, and justice. By ensuring that all workers, regardless of their immigration status, can work freely and without fear, we are reinforcing the foundation of a strong and resilient economy.

For the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Attorney General urges a favorable report on **House Bill 1476**.

cc: The Honorable Delegate Teresa Woorman
Members of the House Economic Matters Committee