

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel
-a 501(c)3 Organization*



Legislative Committee

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HB 489: Maryland Department of Labor – Study on Building Code Requirements for Single–Staircase Buildings

My name is Chief Robert Phillips, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA)

I wish to present testimony in opposition to **House Bill 489: Maryland Department of Labor – Study on Building Code Requirements for Single–Staircase Buildings**

The MSFA opposes this bill because we feel the standard and code are correct in their present form. The present code allows for a single stairway up to four floors and a second stairway above that. WHY? Right now if a fire company arrives to an emergency and we need to remove people from a building with the ground ladders carried on the average engine then we are limited to the first four stories. If we need to assist above the fourth floor then we need to get an aerial device next to the building to assist the people above the fourth floor. This bill seeks to extend the number of floors or stories to six before we need to install a second stairway. With the passage of this bill we will not be in compliance with the fire code, why would we do this. With the passage of this bill, history tells us that we are not becoming more safe, it tells us that we are lowering the safety factor for our citizens and guests to the state of Maryland. As a fire chief and fire ground commander I have never seen forward progress by lowering the standards. Lowering the standards is not the future it is a recipe for disaster.

The MSFA asks that you return a NOT-FAVORABLE vote on HB 489

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions you might have

Respectfully:

Robert Phillips

