

# Journeyman Pipe Fitters and Apprentices



## Local Union No. 602

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TESTIMONY OF CHRIS MADELLO, BUSINESS MANAGER / FINANCIAL  
SECRETARY TREASURER, UA STEAMFITTERS LOCAL 602

SB0938 / HB1096 – FRAUD PREVENTION AND WORKER PROTECTIONS -  
PROHIBITIONS, PENALTIES, AND ENFORCEMENT

BEFORE THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE AND HOUSE ECONOMIC MATTERS  
COMMITTEE

FAVORABLE

Chairs Beidle and Wilson, and Members of the Senate Finance and House Economic  
Matters committees,

I am Chris Madello, and I proudly serve as the Business Manager and Financial  
Secretary Treasurer of UA Steamfitters Local 602. Our union stands as a pillar of  
Maryland's economy and workforce, representing 6,031 Journeymen, 1,200  
Apprentices, and 205 signatory Mechanical Construction and Service Contractors who  
specialize in Heating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration, and Process Piping. We don't just  
work in Maryland—we keep Maryland running. In 2024 alone, our members logged  
more than 9,000,000 work hours, ensuring homes, businesses, and essential facilities  
operate efficiently and safely.

Our success is the product of a strong partnership between labor and business. Our  
signatory contractors, represented by the Mechanical Contractors Association of Metro  
Washington (MCAMW), drive economic growth across the region, generating \$2 billion  
annually and contributing approximately \$500 million in state, federal, and local taxes.  
Unfortunately, the integrity of our industry is continuously threatened by unscrupulous  
employers who sidestep their responsibilities through worker misclassification, wage  
theft, and tax fraud. These dishonest practices hurt everyone—hardworking  
tradespeople, responsible contractors, and the broader economy.

Maryland's current enforcement mechanisms lack the strength to effectively combat  
these abuses. The Attorney General's Office does not have the statutory power to take

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direct action against wage theft and worker misclassification. This allows unethical businesses to undercut legitimate contractors and exploit workers without fear of real consequences. Moreover, these labor violations are often accompanied by tax fraud, unemployment insurance fraud, and workers' compensation fraud, further burdening taxpayers and law-abiding businesses.

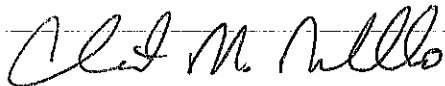
SB0938 / HB1096 presents a much-needed solution by granting the Attorney General concurrent jurisdiction alongside the Department of Labor and other agencies. This expanded authority will enable Maryland to better enforce labor laws, protect workers from exploitation, and level the playing field for ethical businesses. Strong enforcement benefits everyone—ensuring fair wages, stabilizing industry standards, and protecting the tax revenue that funds critical public services.

Maryland cannot afford to fall behind. Other states, including California, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Washington, and the District of Columbia, have already empowered their Attorneys General with statutory authority to enforce wage laws. Meanwhile, states like North Carolina provide this power through constitutional provisions. Maryland must act now to strengthen its enforcement framework and secure economic justice for workers and employers alike.

On behalf of UA Steamfitters Local 602, I urge this committee to give SB0938 / HB1096 a favorable report. This bill is about fairness, accountability, and protecting the workforce that keeps Maryland moving forward.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Madello", written over a horizontal line.

Chris Madello

Business Manager / Financial Secretary Treasurer

UA Steamfitters Local 602