



PLUMBERS LOCAL UNION NO. 5

UNITED ASSOCIATION OF JOURNEYMEN AND APPRENTICES OF THE PLUMBING AND PIPE FITTING INDUSTRY OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO

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In Support of Senate Bill 938 / House Bill 1096

SB938 / HB1096 – FRAUD PREVENTION AND WORKER PROTECTIONS - PROHIBITIONS, PENALTIES, AND ENFORCEMENT

House Economic Matters Committee and Senate Finance Committee

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

On behalf of UA Plumbers and Gasfitters Local 5, I am proud to express our strong support for Senate Bill 938 / House Bill 1096. This critical legislation promotes fairness, accountability, and protection for Maryland workers by addressing the harmful effects of workplace fraud.

The skilled professionals of Local 5 are vital to Maryland's infrastructure, ensuring safe plumbing, efficient gas systems, and reliable sanitation. Our work directly impacts public health, energy efficiency, and economic growth. Yet, our members face ongoing threats from employers who exploit weak labor laws, committing wage theft and worker misclassification.

Maryland's system has loopholes that prevent the Attorney General from taking direct action against employers who underpay workers, deny benefits, and evade taxes. Without statutory authority, these violations go unpunished, harming workers and giving dishonest contractors an unfair advantage. These illegal practices also contribute to tax fraud, unemployment insurance fraud, and workers' compensation fraud, further burdening taxpayers and ethical businesses.

Granting the Attorney General concurrent jurisdiction with the Department of Labor will strengthen enforcement, protect workers, and ensure fair competition. Many states, including California, Illinois, and New York, have already empowered their Attorneys General to combat wage theft and labor fraud. Maryland must follow suit to safeguard its workforce and uphold labor integrity.

UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5 urges the committee to pass SB0938 / HB1096 to ensure fairness in our industry, protect workers, and hold fraudulent employers accountable.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or for further information.

Sincerely,



Michael Canales
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UA Plumbers & Gasfitters Local # 5

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