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March 4, 2025

Legislative Position: Unfavorable

House Bill 850

Procurement - Public Work Contracts - Data Dashboard  
House Health and Government Operations Committee

Dear Chair Pena-Melnyk and members of the committee:

Established in 1950, the Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland, Inc. (AUC) is dedicated to advancing the utility contracting industry across the state. Our mission is to foster strong relationships between utility contractors and their clients, uphold the highest professional standards within the industry, and elevate the reputation of utility professionals within the business community. We actively advocate for public policies that address industry challenges and contribute to improving Maryland's overall business environment.

As introduced, HB 850 would require the Commissioner of Labor and Industry to develop and maintain a data dashboard that includes sensitive information about contractors, subcontractors, and their employees working under public work contracts. As contractors and subcontractors on public work contracts, AUC believes that this bill would unfairly compromise the confidentiality and competitiveness of the businesses in our industry.

The bill language requires contractors to provide detailed information about their employees, including prevailing wage rates, regular and overtime wages, fringe benefits, and job classifications. This information would be made publicly available on a data dashboard, which would be routinely updated. We are concerned that this level of information sharing would provide sensitive information about business operations that would create competitive disadvantages in the public bidding process.

Furthermore, the administrative burden this bill would impose on contractors and subcontractors is extensive. The requirement to provide detailed information about employees on a weekly basis would be time-consuming and costly, and would divert resources away from core business operations.

Transparency and accountability in public contracting are ideals we share, however, HB 850 simply goes too far. We urge the Committee to consider the potential unintended consequences of this bill and to seek alternative solutions that balance the need for transparency with the need to protect the confidentiality and competitiveness of Maryland businesses. **We respectfully request an unfavorable report on HB 850.**

Sincerely,

The Associated Utility Contractors of Maryland (AUC)