

Dear Delegates,

My name is Delbert Louie Griffith, and I am writing to you as a concerned Maryland resident regarding Bill HB1469.

Since graduating high school in 2011, I have been employed at Pepsi Cola Bottling Co. of Havre de Grace. Over the past 14 years, I have had the opportunity to grow both personally and professionally within the company. I began my career as a warehouse worker, later becoming a forklift operator before being promoted to a route sales driver. After several years in that role, I transitioned into management, and I now serve as a small format sales representative. Throughout these various roles, I have developed invaluable skills and built lasting relationships with colleagues and mentors.

This career has provided financial stability for my family, allowing my wife and me to become homeowners in 2016 and to start a family in 2022. We are now raising our two-year-old son, and the security of my job is essential to our livelihood.

Beyond my career, I am deeply committed to giving back to my community. Health and fitness are a significant part of my life, and in my spare time, I coach Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and strength training classes. Through these efforts, I have the privilege of making a positive impact on the lives of those in my community.

The passage of HB1469 would jeopardize all of this. A significant decline in soda industry sales would not only directly affect my family and me but would also have a widespread impact on our local economy and community. With the rising costs of essential expenses such as energy, food, and water, a reduction in income could make it increasingly difficult to make ends meet. This could force me to seek additional employment, taking valuable time away from my family and my ability to contribute to the community.

While I understand and appreciate the intent behind this bill, I strongly believe that its negative consequences will far outweigh the anticipated benefits. I share your concerns regarding the health of Maryland residents, but I do not believe HB1469 will achieve the intended results. Instead, it risks causing economic hardship for hardworking individuals and families like mine.

I respectfully urge you to reconsider the potential impact of this legislation and to explore alternative approaches that do not threaten the livelihoods of thousands of Maryland workers.

Sincerely,

Delbert Louie Griffith
Pepsi Cola Bottling Co. of Havre de Grace
Local Teamsters 570