



House Bill 314

Automation Technology Deployment Assessment and Displaced Employee Retraining Fund - Established

February 4, 2026

Position: **OPPOSE**

Madame Chair and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

The Restaurant Association of Maryland opposes House Bill 314, which would establish a new reporting requirement and fee for covered employers who reduce their workforce due to the deployment of automation technology.

We believe this legislation sets a bad precedent by attempting to interfere with the technology, efficiency and workforce decisions that employers need to make for the sustainability of their businesses. In today's economy, the development and deployment of automation technology cannot be constrained. Enacting this type of legislation would discourage new businesses from locating in Maryland.

In the foodservice/hospitality industry, our dedicated and customer service-oriented employees are the backbones of successful businesses. But as labor, food, and other operating costs soar, narrow profit margin industries like ours are sometimes forced to consider limited forms of automation technology to remain competitive and profitable. This legislation would hinder that.

For these reasons, we oppose this legislation and request an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melvin R. Thompson".

Melvin R. Thompson
Senior Vice President
Government Affairs and Public Policy