



February 4, 2026

Legislative Position: Unfavorable

House Bill 314

Automation Technology Deployment Assessment and Displaced Employee Retraining Fund - Established
House Economic Matters Committee

Dear Chair Valderrama and members of the committee:

Founded in 1969, the Howard Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to helping businesses, from sole proprietors to large international firms, grow and succeed. With the power of 700 members that encompass more than 170,000 employees, the Howard County Chamber is an effective partner with elected officials and advocates for the interests of the county's business community.

We write to respectfully express our opposition to House Bill 314, as introduced. While the Chamber supports policies that foster workforce development, training and upskilling, HB 314 adds regulatory burden and duplicative compliance requirements and adds unnecessary costs to businesses that are essentially a penalty for innovation.

HB 314 Adds Complexity and Duplicative Obligations

HB 314 would impose new annual reporting requirements on employers with 100 or more employees, obligating them to detail automation technologies used and separations attributed to such technologies. This adds administrative complexity to an already intricate compliance landscape of workforce reporting laws. Employers in Maryland must already navigate the federal WARN Act as well as state requirements under the Maryland Economic Stabilization Act (Mini-WARN) for advance notice of layoffs or reductions in workforce. The federal WARN Act and Maryland's mini-WARN laws already require detailed notifications and protections when separations occur. HB 314's separate reporting regime duplicates and overlaps with existing statutory frameworks, creating confusion and an unnecessary burden on business resources that could otherwise be devoted to expansion and hiring.

HB 314 Imposes a De Facto Penalty on Innovation

The bill also imposes an assessment of \$900 per displaced employee reported due to technology deployments. This fee effectively functions as a penalty on businesses that adopt new technologies to remain competitive, innovate, and improve productivity. In today's economy, technology adoption is essential for Maryland businesses to stay viable, especially in sectors facing global competition. Penalizing employers for technological advancements risks disincentivizing productivity investments, ultimately harming job creation and economic growth.



The Howard County Chamber urges an unfavorable report on HB 314 in its current form. We look forward to working with the Legislature to explore collaborative solutions that build upon existing systems and avoid duplicative reporting and punitive cost structures.

Sincerely,

Kristi Simon
President & CEO
Howard County Chamber of Commerce