

Maryland Motor Truck Association



NOTHING WITHOUT
TRUCKING 

HEARING DATE: February 11, 2026

BILL NO/TITLE: HB188: Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act of 2026

COMMITTEE: House Economic Matters

POSITION: **Oppose**

Maryland Motor Truck Association (MMTA) respectfully offers its opposition to this legislation, which will substantially drive-up unemployment insurance costs on businesses by:

- Eliminating the taxable wage base of \$8,500 and tying it to the state's average weekly wage;
- Dramatically driving up the weekly benefit amount by also tying it to the state's average weekly range. The estimated increase in minimum benefits is 356% and 41% for maximum benefits.

With the exception of Massachusetts, Maryland (along with several other states) has the longest benefit period in the country at 26 weeks; however, unlike many other states, Maryland does not have a one-week waiting period for unemployment benefits, meaning claimants are eligible for benefits the day after they become unemployed.

The trucking industry is suffering from a massive labor shortage of qualified drivers. National data from the American Trucking Associations indicates the current shortfall is close to 80,000 drivers. Virtually every company that operates commercial trucks needs more drivers. We also have significant shortages among vehicle mechanics and technicians. Jobs are readily available.

In lieu of efforts to further disincentivize citizens to actively search for work by increasing unemployment insurance benefits, the state should focus its efforts on getting Marylanders the job training and skills they need to take advantage of opportunities in high demand industry sectors like transportation.

For the reasons noted above, MMTA requests an unfavorable report on this legislation.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association that has represented the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 1,000 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

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