



HEARING DATE: March 11, 2026

BILL NO/TITLE: SB804: Labor and Employment - Occupational Safety and Health - Revisions to Heat Stress Standards

COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee

POSITION: **Support**

Maryland Motor Truck Association offers its wholehearted support for SB804 with the amendments being offered by the sponsor.

While the Association appreciates the Department of Labor's efforts to protect employees from heat stress and heat-related illness, MMTA believes the regulations adopted in September 2024 are overly prescriptive and force a one-size-fits-all solution on various industries without considering the need for flexibility based on different work environments. That flexibility is needed for our members as the trucking industry includes construction, package delivery, trash trucks, farming, household goods moving/storage, cross-dock warehousing and distribution, vehicle maintenance and repair, and much more. The industry a broad spectrum of white-collar and blue-collar workers, such as drivers, laborers, mechanics, safety personnel, transportation managers, and more. Some employees work indoors while others spend the bulk of their day outdoors, depending on industry sector and job type.

In no way does the passage of SB804 remove a business' responsibility to protect workers from heat stress. Reputable employers want to ensure their workers are protected; however, it does give the employers flexibility to consider their industries, the workload, and the working environment as they develop their plans, set rest breaks, and take other actions to protect their employees.

Employers must still develop heat illness prevention plans. Those plans must include how they will manage heat acclimatization for newly exposed employees, but it removes the rigid mandate of a 5-14 day period with a maximum 20% increase in workload daily. SB804 still requires that businesses develop high-heat procedures that include work and rest schedules to protect employees, but does not spell out the exact length and frequency of the rest break. Employers still have to provide the same amount of water at no cost, provide access to shade or air conditioning, and develop a written emergency response plan. But the regulations drafted seem to be based on the premise that employers are unwilling or uninterested in protecting their employees and managing their heat risk. What resulted was the most rigid set of regulations in the country.

The passage of SB804 will protect workers who are exposed to high heat and keep them safe, but without paralyzing the businesses that employ them. For the reasons noted above, MMTA urges a favorable report with the amendments offered by the sponsor.

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 900 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

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