

March 9, 2026

The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB886 - Consumer Protection and Labor and Employment - Food Service Facilities and Minimum Wage

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to request an unfavorable vote on Senate Bill 886 – Consumer Protection and Labor and Employment - Food Service Facilities and Minimum Wage, now pending before the General Assembly.

While our employers share the desire to improve opportunities for Maryland workers, this proposal in its current form throws a one-size-fits-all wage mandate on businesses without regard to local economic conditions, narrow margins, or competitive realities.

For so many of our small businesses in Allegany County, these mandated increases present several real threats, including possible reduced hiring and hours, higher consumer prices, and competitive disadvantage. Our community relies on residents, teens, and part-time workers, especially those entering the workforce to keep our businesses open. Mandated wage spikes will no doubt be cause for cutting hours or positions. To absorb the mandated increases, we would once again see price increases. In a location like Allegany County, there is a significant risk of business impact when consumers can easily access lower prices in West Virginia and Pennsylvania, both just minutes from Maryland locations.

The Chamber of Commerce employs three staff who are educated, knowledgeable and dedicated to our work. Salaries are competitive for professionals in our community in-part due to affordable membership dues, successful events, and member advertising. An increase of this level would cause our organization to reassess all revenue sources. As dues increase, we would see a reduction in members, and as event sponsorships and ticket pricing go up to balance other losses, we would need to retool our staffing.

We urge the Legislature to consider alternatives that do not disproportionately disadvantage rural employers, such as targeted tax incentives for wage growth, sector-specific wage dialogs, or localized pilot programs that allow communities to tailor solutions.

Increasing worker opportunity is important, but it must be done in a way that preserves the ability of local employers to stay open, invest, and continue providing jobs and services in Allegany County. Thank you for considering an unfavorable vote on SB886.

Sincerely,



Juli McCoy
President & CEO
Allegany County Chamber of Commerce