

**PAMELA G. BEIDLE**  
*Legislative District 32*  
Anne Arundel County



Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Suite 3 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3593  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3593  
Pamela.Beidle@senate.maryland.gov

Chair, Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight

Joint Committee on Management  
of Public Funds

Spending Affordability Committee

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

March 11, 2026

**SB 804**  
**Labor and Employment – Occupational Safety and Health**  
**Revisions to Heat Stress Standards**

Good afternoon Vice Chair Hayes and Members of the Finance Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 804, Labor and Employment – Occupational Safety and Health, Revisions to Heat Stress Standards.

In 2020, the General Assembly passed House Bill 722. The legislation directed the Commissioner of Labor to develop and adopt regulations to require employers to protect employees from heat-related illness caused by heat stress. They held hearings around the state, considered standards created by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, and the American National Standards Institute.

The Department of Labor created some of the most restrictive regulations on businesses in the country. When the regulations went into effect, I heard from many businesses that the regulations were paralyzing them. I do not believe that was the legislature's intent when the bill was passed in 2020. Last year, I gathered representatives from several different industries and the Department of Labor together, the discussion was lively. We hoped to encourage the agency to review and consider modifications to the regulations, however no modifications have been made, so Senate Bill 804 was introduced.

Several states, like California, have heat protection rules in place, much of the language proposed in SB 804 models these states. SB 804 requires businesses to create plans protecting their employees with flexibility in how those plans are implemented based on their operations as opposed to the one size fits all mandate on dramatically different industries.

Senate Bill 804 ensures workers are protected by requiring:

- Employers to develop heat illness prevention plans.
- Employers to develop a heat acclimatization schedule for newly exposed employees.
- Employers to provide shade or the opportunity to cool off in climate-controlled areas.
- Employers to develop high-heat procedures that include work and rest schedules to protect employees.
- Employers must provide their workers with the exact same amount of water at no cost as currently required.
- Employers must develop a written emergency response plan as currently required.
- Supervisors must undergo initial training, with recurrent training if an employee under the supervisor's direction has a heat related incident, as currently required.

SB 804 gives employers flexibility to consider their industries, the workload, and the working environment as they develop their heat stress plans, set rest breaks, and take other actions to protect their employees.

I respectfully request a "Favorable Report" on Senate Bill 804.