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CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION
FALSE CLAIMS UNIT**

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To: The Honorable Melissa Wells, Chair
Government, Labor and Elections Committee

From: Heather Heilman, Assistant Attorney General *HH*
Consumer Protection Division

Date: February 10, 2026

Re: Letter of Concern

House Bill 516—Maryland Department of Labor - Investigation of Complaints - Requirements
(Worksite Enforcement Act of 2026)

The Office of the Attorney General is concerned about House Bill 516, because it would compel the Maryland Department of Labor (MDOL) to refer complaints to the Consumer Protection Division (CPD) of the Office of the Attorney General that CPD does not have the authority or resources to investigate, litigate, or address in any way. The bill provides that MDOL must establish procedures for receiving, reviewing and investigating complaints within its jurisdiction “including mismanagement, misconduct, abuse, fraud, waste, and behavior that threatens public safety or demonstrates negligence, incompetence or malfeasance.” It also requires MDOL to cooperate and coordinate its investigations of such matters with CPD, or to simply refer them to CPD.

Among the matters that are within MDOL’s jurisdiction are unemployment insurance, occupational and professional licensing, the regulation of the horse racing industry, and, within the Division of Labor and Industry, employment standards and building codes administration. A complaint about any of these matters could fall within the bill’s parameters of complaints that involve “mismanagement, misconduct, abuse, fraud, waste, and behavior that threatens public safety or demonstrates negligence, incompetence or malfeasance.”

These matters are governed by different statutes that each provide their own enforcement processes. Generally, CPD does not have the statutory authority to investigate or enforce these laws, nor does any division of the Office of the Attorney General. House Bill 516 would compel MDOL to refer complaints to CPD, but does not give CPD authority to address those complaints. The apparent intention of the bill is to improve the speed and effectiveness of MDOL’s investigations, but that will not be accomplished by the wholesale transfer of complaints to CPD, which lacks not only the authority to investigate such

complaints, but also subject matter expertise in many areas within MDOL's jurisdiction, such as elevator safety or the licensing of architects. Even if CPD was able to develop expertise in any of these areas, it would require significant additional resources to investigate and prosecute violations referred by MDOL.

For these reasons, the Office of the Attorney General respectfully requests that the Government, Labor and Elections Committee take its concerns into account when considering House Bill 516.

cc: The Honorable Joe Vogel