

February 26, 2026

Opposition to House Bill 1229 – Consumer Protection and Labor and Employment – Food Service Facilities and Minimum Wage

To the Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

My name is Emilie Kleiner, and I am the Owner of Cicada Design in Rising Sun, Maryland. We have operated here for 4 years and currently employ 0 people. I am writing in opposition to HB 1229.

I understand the intent of this bill is to raise worker earnings, and I care deeply about any future employees. But this proposal would create economic consequences many businesses like mine simply cannot absorb - threatening jobs, increasing costs, and undermining stability.

Raising the minimum wage to \$25 per hour by 2030 – a 67% increase – is not a small adjustment. For our business, that would mean:

- Less likelihood for me to hire anyone due to not being able to afford it
- Pressure to raise prices for our customers
- Difficult decisions about staffing levels, hours, or expansion

This would not only affect entry-level positions. It would impact my whole company due to compression.

What concerns me most is placing this policy into the Maryland Constitution. Embedding it there would effectively lock in sweeping economic mandates with little ability to correct course if the consequences prove damaging. That level of permanence is risky for employers, workers and communities alike.

I am not opposed to fair wages. I am concerned about sustainability – and whether businesses like mine will be able to continue operating and employing Marylanders under this structure.

I respectfully ask you to oppose HB 1229.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Emilie C. Kleiner
Owner
Cicada Design
Rising Sun, MD