



House Bill 0203

Labor and Employment-Training Repayment Agreements-Prohibition In the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee Hearing on February 5, 2026 Position: FAVORABLE

Maryland Legal Aid respectfully submits this testimony on House Bill 0203 (HB0203) at the request of Delegate Vogel.

Maryland Legal Aid Supports HB0203 Because It Protects the Workers We Serve and Expands Access to Justice.

Maryland Legal Aid appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB0203. This is important legislation that prohibits employers from requiring workers or job applicants to enter into training repayment agreements as a condition of employment. Training repayment agreements often require workers to repay their employers if they leave a job within a specified period regardless of whether the separation is voluntary or involuntary. HB0203 also provides workers with the ability to pursue damages through a private right of enforcement.

As the state's largest provider of free civil legal services, Maryland Legal Aid represents workers across Maryland, many of whom are employed in low-wage, high-turnover industries where repayment agreements are common. Our clients include workers in healthcare, food service, construction, janitorial and housekeeping services, security, and warehouse work. The training repayment agreements disproportionately harm these most vulnerable and marginalized workers who lack the financial means to repay alleged training costs.

HB0203 declares training repayment agreements void as against public policy and prohibits employers from requiring them as a condition of employment. It provides enforcement provisions that include a private right of action, civil penalties, and treble damages. With the expansion of remedies, Maryland Legal Aid can strategically advocate for our clients by providing them with the option to file a private right of action seeking damages caused by entering into repayment training agreements.

For these reasons, Maryland Legal Aid respectfully urges a **favorable report** on House Bill 0203.

If you would like additional information on this bill or the underlying issues it addresses, please contact Meaghan McDermott, Advocacy Director for Community Lawyering and Development at mmcdermott@mdlab.org or N. Renae Davis, Chief Attorney for Workers' Rights at ndavis@mdlab.org.