



CITY OF CUMBERLAND Maryland

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CITY CLERK
ALLISON K. LAYTON, CPM

[Delegate Melissa Wells](#), Chair
[Delegate Kenneth Kerr](#), Vice-Chair
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
142 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 532/ Senate Bill 445: Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information – OPPOSED

February 6, 2026

Dear Chairwoman Wells, Vice-Chair Kerr, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the City of Cumberland, I respectfully write this letter of opposition on House Bill 532/ Senate Bill 445: Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information.

As you may know, Cumberland's Fire Department has a rich history which dates back to its inception on March 6, 1906. Initially, it was staffed by four men at Central Station 1 and three men at South End Station 2. The department's apparatus included a 65-foot Seagrave aerial ladder truck and three American LaFrance combination chemical engine and hose wagons, all horse-drawn with six horses. Since then, the department has significantly grown to include 65 members, with a focus on providing the best possible fire protection and emergency medical services to the citizens of Cumberland, Maryland. The department is proudly committed to increasing the efficiency and quality of service to its community.

Last year, this legislation was introduced and successfully passed the House Chamber despite concerns raised by some local jurisdictions, including Frederick, Howard, and Montgomery counties and Baltimore City. According to the 2025 fiscal note, those jurisdictions estimated their personnel costs would increase by "*millions of dollars as a result of paying additional overtime wages or hiring more firefighters to cover shifts.*" The City of Cumberland analyzed the fiscal impacts of this legislation and concluded similar consternation as the previously mentioned jurisdictions.

Understanding the real possibility that this bill would be re-introduced during this legislation session, we respectfully (and timely) wanted to share our concerns for the record. Based on the employee pay rates and the number of firefighters employed in our department, the City's operational expenditures would increase by hundreds of thousands of dollars if HB532/SB445 were to be enacted.

Federal law generally requires governments to pay firefighters overtime wages after 212 hours are worked in a 28-day period. The City of Cumberland pays overtime for its firefighters based on the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Firefighters are entitled to overtime pay after working more than 40 hours in a workweek, with a threshold of 56 hours before they must receive overtime pay. Additionally, firefighters may receive compensatory time if they work more than 48 hours in a workweek, which can be accrued up to 480 hours.

As your committee reviews the testimony, fiscal note, and other local jurisdiction testimonials, we hope that you take our concerns into serious consideration before rendering any decisions. In these fiscal times, municipalities, like Cumberland, cannot absorb these costs, nor can the 19,000 residents that we serve. For these reasons, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report. Should you need additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out at any time, we will happily accommodate your request.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond M. Morriss". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mayor Raymond Morriss
City of Cumberland



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