



Central Maryland Chamber
Conduit of Commerce

Good afternoon Chair and members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce (CMC). Founded through the merger of the Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber (est. 1948) and the West Anne Arundel County Chamber (est. 1962), CMC now represents businesses across Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, Baltimore City, Carroll County, Harford County, Montgomery County, Howard County, and Prince George's County. CMC serves as a principal business advocate during a period of continued regional growth and economic transition.

We respectfully urge an unfavorable report on HB 1229 / SB 886.

While we support policies that increase opportunity and economic mobility, this proposal would impose a 67 percent minimum wage increase in just a few years, eliminate the tip credit, automatically index wages to inflation, and embed these mandates into the Maryland Constitution.

For many small and mid-sized employers — particularly in hospitality, retail, childcare, and healthcare support services — these changes would dramatically increase payroll costs and create wage compression across entire pay structures. Businesses will be forced to make difficult decisions about staffing levels, pricing, automation, and long-term investment in Maryland.

Most concerning is the constitutional amendment component. Wage policy must remain flexible. Locking it into the Constitution removes the ability for future legislatures to respond to economic downturns or unintended consequences.

This is not about opposing workers. It is about ensuring policies strengthen — rather than destabilize — the businesses that sustain Maryland's workforce.

We respectfully ask for your opposition. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warmly,

Dewan Clayborn

President & CEO

Central Maryland Chamber of Commerce