



## TESTIMONY

### HB1479 Labor and Employment – Minimum Wage – Increase (Maryland Raise the Wage Act)

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Boafo

**Committee:** House Government, Labor, and Elections

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, Co-Chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in support of **HB1479** on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. We are an association of unpaid citizen advocates—individuals and grassroots groups in every district across the state—representing and supporting more than 30,000 Marylanders.

For decades, Maryland has allowed wages to stagnate while the cost of living has exploded. HB1479 finally begins to correct that imbalance by raising the minimum wage to \$18 and tying future increases to the Consumer Price Index so workers aren't pushed deeper into poverty every year. Poverty wages have devastated families, widened racial inequities, and drained wealth from entire communities. A state that claims to value dignity and fairness cannot keep defending an economy built on underpaid labor.

With affordability as a national issue, this legislation strengthens economic stability for working families and supports local economies. When workers earn enough to meet basic needs, they spend those dollars in their communities—supporting small businesses, improving housing stability, and reducing reliance on public assistance. Raising the wage is one of the most effective tools we have to reduce inequality and build a more resilient, inclusive economy.

HB1479 aligns directly with the mission of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. Our work centers on equity and civic empowerment. Ensuring that every Marylander can earn a wage that reflects the real cost of living is essential to building a fair and thriving state.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on HB1479.