



TESTIMONY

SB0831 Labor Law – Child Labor Penalties, Private Sector Employee Labor Relations, and State Employee Labor Standards

Bill Sponsor: Senator Ferguson

Committee: 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 **SB0831** 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.

Across the country, child labor violations are rising—minors working excessive hours, performing dangerous tasks, or being exploited as cheap labor. SB0831 strengthens Maryland’s protections by establishing civil penalties for employers who violate child labor laws and updating work-permit requirements to ensure young workers are not placed in hazardous situations. Children should not be sacrificed to fill labor shortages; Maryland must draw a clear line that young people deserve safety and the freedom to grow without exploitation.

Beyond protecting minors, SB0831 reinforces the rights of all workers. It strengthens private-sector labor rights by ensuring that workers can bring disputes to the Public Employee Relations Board and organize without interference. It also upholds essential standards for state employees by prohibiting Maryland from seeking federal waivers that would weaken the overtime and wage protections guaranteed under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

This legislation reflects the Coalition’s commitment to equity, justice, and protecting Marylanders from preventable harm. By addressing exploitation at every level — from the protection of children to the collective bargaining rights of the broader workforce — SB0831 ensures Maryland remains a leader in labor dignity.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB0831.