



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT 4
FREDERICK COUNTY

March 10, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells and Kenneth Kerr
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

RE: Support for HB532/SB445 - Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information

Dear Chair Melissa Wells and Vice- Chair Kenneth Kerr,

We are writing to express our support for HB532 - Employment Standards - Firefighters - Payment of Wages and Payroll Information. This legislation as written would provide fair compensation for our firefighters by standardizing payroll. Specifically, the bill requires Fire Companies to pay overtime pay for each hour over 168 hours that a firefighter works during a 28-day work period. Additionally, it sets standards for a clear payroll and allows firefighters to file grievances if these standards are not met.

Entering homes well exceeding 100-degree heat and combating other hazardous conditions such as smoke and toxic fumes, firefighting is both a physical and emotionally demanding job. A typical standard work week across many jobs in the state is 40 hours; however, this is not the case for firefighting. Firefighting requires long and irregular hours.

Currently, states law does not compensate these brave heroes for overtime work. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), requires departments to pay overtime unless state law differs from the federal law. Under Maryland law, an employer is required to pay overtime for each hour, over 40 hours worked. Though this provision does not apply to government units. Therefore, career firefighters as employees of the state are not subject to overtime. Instead, firefighters rely on collective bargaining to reduce work hours. Collective bargaining is a slow approach and does not adequately address the needs of firefighters. Enduring long hours of work increases the risk of burnout and physical injury. Setting clear standards of pay will support both the physical and mental wellbeing of firefighters.

For Frederick County, this legislation holds particular significance. Home to over 600 paid full-time career firefighters, HB532 will directly benefit the county, setting clear standards of pay to ensure transparency and fairness for those who put their life on the line to keep our county safe.

We appreciate your leadership and urge a favorable report on this legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

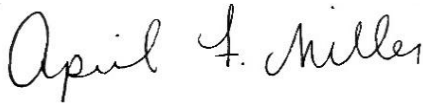
Sincerely,



Senator William Folden



Delegate Barrie S. Ciliberti



Delegate April F. Miller



Delegate Jesse T. Pippy