

February 3, 2023

Economic Matters Committee  
The Honorable Delegate C. T. Wilson  
Room 231  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 0549 – Fair Wage Act of 2023 – Oppose**

Dear Delegate Wilson:

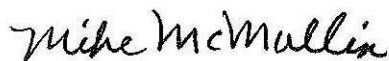
This bill will greatly accelerate the increase in the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour. There are several reasons why the proposed acceleration is ill-advised at this time.

Budgets for the current year (whether calendar or fiscal) have already been set for most, if not all businesses. These changes will add unnecessary financial pressure while these same businesses are still recovering from the damage done by the pandemic. Furthermore, those businesses that can afford to do so are already increasing wages in an effort to remain competitive in the market for scarce labor. This market pressure – not government mandate – is what *should* be driving wage increases, along with the value of any particular job.

In fact, recent studies have shown that in reality, there are few “minimum wage” jobs left, due to both appropriate market pressure, as well as government requirements. Adding this artificial layer to the process will only further compound the wage compression facing these businesses; there will be the necessity to raise wages of some existing employees to achieve some level of equity with newly hired employees.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of nearly 700 members, opposes this bill and therefore requests that you give it an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,



Mike McMullin  
President  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Senator Justin Ready  
Delegate April Rose