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NFIB-Maryland – 60 West St., Suite 101 – Annapolis, MD 21401 – [www.NFIB.com/Maryland](http://www.NFIB.com/Maryland)

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: NFIB – Maryland

DATE: February 28, 2024

RE: **SUPPORT HOUSE BILL 998** – Maryland Department of Labor – Unemployment Insurance – Study on Actively Seeking Work Requirements

Founded in 1943, NFIB is the voice of small business, advocating on behalf of America’s small and independent business owners, both in Washington, D.C., and in all 50 state capitals. With more than 250,000 members nationwide, and nearly 4,000 here in Maryland, we work to protect and promote the ability of our members to grow and operate their business.

On behalf of Maryland’s small businesses, NFIB-Maryland supports House Bill 998 – legislation asking the Department of Labor to study the rising issue of “ghosting” as it relates to unemployment insurance claims.

“Ghosting,” as defined in the bill, is the failure of an unemployment insurance claimant who is scheduled for a job interview to attend or maintain contact with the employer after the interview is scheduled.

A lot of debate has taken place over the past few legislative sessions on the health of the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund (UITF), its solvency, and potential changes to the system. One thing missing from the discussion is the issue of ghosting and its impact on the UITF. How many benefits are being erroneously paid out because of it? Do the work search requirements need to be reevaluated?

These are important questions that deserve answers as this body moves forward in debating changes to the state’s unemployment insurance program.

For these reasons **NFIB supports HB998** and requests a favorable committee report.