



January 20, 2020

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB 0217 – Equal Pay for Equal Work - Inquiring About Wages - Prohibition on Adverse Action – Oppose

Dear Senator Kelley:

SB 0217 would prohibit a business from taking any adverse employment action against an employee for inquiring about the employee's wages. In addition, businesses cannot prohibit employees from discussing wages, or asking about their own wages or take adverse action against an employee for asking about their or another's wages.

First and foremost, these actions are already prohibited under the National Labor Relations Act. The state bill does not appear to offer any additional protection to employees, and therefore seems unnecessary. Real world situations also exist that serve to show the unintended consequences presented by this bill. The bill gives an employee the right to discuss *another employee's* wages. It is not uncommon for an employee to complain that one or more coworkers are discussing his or her wages without that employee's permission. This is sometimes in the form of workplace bullying, when one or more coworkers harass an employee who just received a pay increase. In one specific example, the coworkers bullied the coworker on social media suggesting she received a raise in exchange for sexual favors. This bill would allow this without consequence.

As written, in Section 3-304.1(a)(3)(iii), reads, "discussing another employee's wages if those wages have been disclosed voluntarily;". To avoid examples as cited above, the section should read "discussing another employee's wages if those wages have been disclosed *by the other employee* voluntarily;"

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 600 members, opposes this bill. We therefore request that you give this bill an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike McMullin". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mike McMullin
President
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce
CC: Senator Justin Ready
Delegate Haven Shoemaker

**Carroll County Chamber of Commerce • 9 East Main Street • Westminster, MD 21157
Phone: 410-848-9050 • Fax: 410-876-1023 • www.carrollcountychamber.org**