



January 24, 2022

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

RE: **SB 0010** - Workers' Compensation - COVID-19 Occupational Disease Presumption  
- **Oppose**

Dear Senator Kelley:

SB 0010 would establish that first responders, public safety employees, and health care workers are presumed to have an occupational disease that is compensable under workers' compensation law after a positive test or diagnosis for COVID-19; and would apply retroactively.

COVID-19 is a global pandemic. Community spread has been high for most of the last two years. First responders, public safety employees, and health care workers participate in the same activities of life as any other citizen. They go to grocery stores, they travel, they attend gatherings with families and friends (both indoor and outdoor), they go to restaurants and bars. Not all of these people are vaccinated or wear masks at all appropriate times. This bill puts an unreasonable penalty on employers (higher workers' comp rates, etc.) when contracting this virus is as likely, if not more so, due to activities outside the workplace.

It has been stated by more than one nationally known medical professional (Dr. Anthony Fauci and others) that it is highly likely that most, if not all, people will contract COVID-19. It is incomprehensible that businesses should bear the brunt of the financial responsibility. The unintended consequences of the restrictions in place over the last two years have already decimated or destroyed many businesses. Adding further burdens will only serve to prolong and deepen the damage.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, a business advocacy organization of over 680 members, opposes this requirement. We therefore request that you give this bill an unfavorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Mike McMullin'.

Mike McMullin  
President  
Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

CC: Delegate Haven Shoemaker  
Senator Justin Ready