

**STATEMENT BY
THE GREATER BETHESDA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
REGARDING
SB105- PEACE ORDERS- WORKPLACE VIOLENCE
BEFORE
SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 28, 2021
POSITION: FAVORABLE REPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

On behalf of our 500-member businesses and more than 45,000 employees in Montgomery County, this statement is in **Support of SB105 -Peace Orders- Workplace Violence with Amendments**. This bill makes certain provisions of the law relating to the filing, issuance and modification of certain peace orders and to the shielding of certain court records filed by certain employees and provides immunity from civil liability to employers under certain circumstances.

Although this legislation is important and we support it, we do have the following recommended changes:

1. Section 3-1503(a) (1). I believe that, in the fifth line of that section, the language should be changed from 30 days to 60 days. It is certainly possible that an act can be brewing for some time, and then manifest itself as a very serious concern later. A shorter time period might have the unintended effect of pressuring a petitioner to file a petition prematurely.
2. Sections 3-1503(E) (1). I do not agree with the requirement that an employer notify an employee *before* the employer files a petition under the new law. An essential point here is that the employer may need to act on an emergency basis *without giving prior notice* to the employee (and giving prior notice to the employee may only make matters worse). As a practical matter, a court may issue an interim peace order – to preserve the status quo pending a full hearing – based solely upon information provided by the complainant.
3. Section 3-1505 (f). I would change the period of time that the final peace order shall be effective from “not to exceed six months” to “not to exceed 12 months”.

We thank Senator Snyder for sponsoring this bill and urge the committee to render a **favorable report with the noted amendments**. Thank you for your consideration of our remarks.