



Testimony on behalf of the Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce

*In Opposition to
House Bill 554—Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act of 2025*

*February 26, 2025
House Economic Matters Committee*

The Greater Bethesda Chamber of Commerce (GBCC) was founded in 1926. Since then, the organization has grown to more than 600 businesses located throughout the Greater Bethesda area and beyond. On behalf of these members, we appreciate the opportunity to provide written comments on House Bill 554—Unemployment Insurance Modernization Act of 2025.

House Bill 554 expands the overall size of the State’s unemployment insurance program by increasing employee benefits and increasing employer taxable wages and indexing several major components to wage growth and inflation. We have a lot of concern about this as it stands to have an enormous impact on our small business members and on small businesses across the State. In fact, the fiscal note for House Bill 554 states, “small businesses pay significantly higher State UI taxes beginning in fiscal 2026.” If it is determined that the unemployment insurance system in Maryland needs modernizing, all voices—employers and employees—need to be at the table to determine the best course forward. In addition, we would hope more time and study would be given to such a discussion, especially since it has such a significant impact on employers’ tax liability.

For these reasons, we would respectfully request an unfavorable vote on House Bill 554. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments.