



To Lead, Advocate and Connect as the Voice of Business

Bill 12-19 - Human Rights and Civil Liberties - Building Maintenance Worker - Minimum Work Week

OPPOSE

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) accelerates the success of our over 500 members by advocating for increased business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and is proud to be a Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

Bill 12-19 requires an employer to provide a minimum work week of at least 30 hours for each employee working as a janitor, building cleaner, security officer, concierge, door person, handy person or building superintendent at an office building occupying at least 350,000 square feet in the County.

The goal of this legislation – to have employers provide health care coverage to workers – may create more negative impacts that end up hurting the very people it purports to help.

For the workers

The nature of building services work entails hours that do not comport with a regular full-time schedule. Much of this work takes place ‘after hours’ when a full eight hours is not necessary or practical. If a minimum work week is imposed on these particular buildings, part time shifts will be lost to fewer full-time shifts. This results in fewer people working longer hours. Full time work ‘after hours’ limits the ability of some who choose to use these opportunities as a second job, further compounding the loss of hours. Moreover, forcing these workers to work shifts that last later into the night makes it difficult if not impossible for them to utilize public transportation which has limited service availability in off-peak times.

Part time work will no longer exist.

For a student, a care taker, a full-time employee who is looking for supplemental income, these part-time, supplemental income opportunities in this sector will no longer exist. If these jobs become full-time, other options during the rest of the day may be limited. It is hard to hold down two full-time jobs

Mandating a minimum work week will reduce the workforce.

There is only a limited amount of work to do. If you have more time to do it, you need fewer people to perform those same tasks. *“We would layoff approximately 25%-50% of our current staff depending on which conversion the client chose 6 or 8 hours. I ran some numbers for one of our buildings where we currently have 40-night employees, if converted to a 6-hour shift our staff would be reduced to 28 cleaners, for an 8-hour shift, our staff would be cut in half to 20 cleaners.”*

For the building owners

Office vacancy continues to be a challenge throughout Montgomery County. Increasing the cost to operate the building gets passed to the end user – the tenant. If it is too expensive to rent the space, the space remains vacant. This impacts the ability to generate income (and taxes) as well as sell a property. Ultimately, it is bad for the local economy.

End result

While the approach in the proposed legislation may reduce the number of individuals who will need government assistance for health care coverage (seeking low-cost options on the individual exchange and receiving a subsidy), it may also increase the demand for unemployment assistance, increased hours of operation for transit systems, energy costs for keeping buildings open longer, and reduced revenue due to decrease in business activity.