



Maryland  
Hospital Association

July 15, 2020

Baltimore City Council President Brandon Scott  
Baltimore City Council Labor Committee Chair Shannon Sneed  
Baltimore City Council Labor Committee Members  
100 N. Holliday Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: Baltimore City Council Bill 20-0544: COVID-19-Laid-off Employees Right of Recall

Dear President Scott, Chair Sneed, and Members of the Baltimore City Council Labor Committee,

On behalf of the Maryland Hospital Association's Baltimore City members, all of whom are nonprofit organizations, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on Council Bill 20-0544: COVID-19 Laid-off Employees Right of Recall. MHA shares the Council's goal of ensuring that employees are not negatively affected by the devastating economic fallout of COVID-19. Hospitals look forward to continuing the work of our public-private partnership with Baltimore City as we work in collaboration to address this global pandemic.

Baltimore City's hospitals and the thousands of residents they employ are on the front lines of the pandemic and are critically important to our collective goal of defeating this unprecedented public health crisis. Due to the unique role and challenges our health care system is facing, **we urge you to exempt hospitals from Council Bill 20-0544.** This action has been taken by other cities considering similar legislation.

Hospitals are sensitive to the impact job loss or furloughs can have on families and already consider it best practice to recall laid-off employees for new positions when possible and practicable. Yet, mandating these actions in statute is concerning, particularly given the unique and ever-changing operational challenges hospitals face each day—a situation that is heightened as they help lead Maryland's fight against COVID-19. All industries are being impacted by this pandemic. While some have seen the demand for their services decrease, the demand on hospital services has increased exponentially. Hospitals are constantly responding to the demands of COVID-19, and need flexibility to adjust accordingly, particularly with their workforce. For example, they are redeploying staff to avoid layoffs, beefing up capacity in anticipation of case surges, and modifying staffing levels based on patient acuity, all while facing an unprecedented and unpredictable public health emergency.

Hospitals recognize and value the incredible, lifesaving work that all of their dedicated employees do each day, including our maintenance and janitorial staff whose roles are critical to tackling COVID-19. To ensure these health care heroes remain safe and have appropriate protections in place during the pandemic, hospitals have secured hotel accommodations, reliable

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childcare, and transportation as well as provided groceries, and other support they needed to keep their community healthy. These and other efforts will continue, as all hospital employees are the backbone of Maryland's health care system.

Hospitals appreciate your consideration and stand ready to partner with you in addressing the many issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Frazee". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Brian Frazee  
Vice President, Government Affairs