



Official Testimony  
HB172  
Union Dues and Expenses to Influence Collective Bargaining  
Position: **FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Ways & Means Committee,

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the nation – representing 10,000 healthcare workers in long-term care facilities and hospitals across Maryland. Our union supports HB172: Income Tax – Determination of Taxable Income – Union Dues and Expenses to Influence Collective Bargaining and urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.

In a time where many workers represented by unions or other forms of employee organizations experience low wages and other financial conditions that tend to benefit the employer over the employee, passing this legislation would give these same workers a right to a fairer tax structure. This bill would allow union members, many of whom are also essential workers, the ability to deduct their union dues from their Maryland state taxes. This would decrease the financial concern that some workers have about joining a union and therefore, allow more workers to have their rights and concerns properly represented without fear of backlash. In practice, this opportunity could only amount to workers obtaining better working conditions and higher wages.

For 1199SEIU members, this bill is also important because it would prevent businesses from deducting union-busting costs from workers. Our members recognize the need for unions and know that union-busting is only used to diminish workers' voices and find that the costs that employers use for union busting activities could be redirected for workers' wages and worksite concerns. By passing this legislation, it would end this longtime practice of employers writing off union busting costs to the State and also prevent an even greater wealth gap between the employer and employees.

The members of 1199SEIU stand behind this piece of legislation because it promotes the ability to create and maintain fairer working conditions by giving workers more of an incentive to unionize. It removes a possible financial barrier that some workers may find to be the only reason that they don't join a union. When the voices of worker shortages are occurring in every

field of the workforce and where employees have little to no voice their concerns, particularly during COVID-19, we encourage this Committee to give HB172 a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Ricarra Jones  
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