

**Written Testimony Submitted for the Record
to the Maryland State House of Representatives
Before the House Economic Matters Committee
Submitted by Rosemary Wertz, Field Coordinator with AFT Healthcare-Maryland
February 14, 2023
House Bill 181
Position - Support**

Good afternoon Chairman and members of the House Economic Matters Committee

I am Rosemary Wertz, Field Coordinator for AFT Healthcare-Maryland, the exclusive bargaining representative for Healthcare Professionals in Maryland State government. Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 181. Our bargaining unit includes Registered Nurses, Physicians, Therapists and Counselors. We also represent Healthcare Professional classifications such as Health Policy Analysts, that do the administrative and regulatory work of the department. The vacancy and turn over rate for classifications in our bargaining unit have increased over the last few years. We negotiated a 36 hour workweek program for our Registered Nurses in 24/7 facilities a few years ago. This alternative workweek has positively impacted recruitment and retention of nurses in the facilities using the program.

Recruitment and retention of employees is becoming more and more about work/life balance. The Department of Budget and Management's website includes information about "good work life balance" on the page advertising positions. We support all efforts to offer shift options to employees that fit their lives. State government must be able to compete in the marketplace for employees. AFT Healthcare-Maryland supports HB 181 and urges a favorable vote from this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

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