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AFT-Maryland

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**Written testimony submitted to the Maryland Senate Education, Energy
and Environment Committee
SB 893 - Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023
March 8, 2023**

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS

Chair Feldman and members of the committee, on behalf of the 20,000 members of the American Federation of Teachers – Maryland (AFT-MD), including our local affiliate, the Baltimore Teachers Union (BTU), we ask for a favorable report with amendments on SB 893 - Maryland Educator Shortage Act of 2023.

This Administration bill would among other things, change alternative teacher preparation programs and require them to set recruitment goals; transfers administration of the Teaching Fellows for Maryland scholarship to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE); and establishes the Grow Our Own Educators Scholarship Program.

AFT-MD supports this legislation with two amendments.
Page 20, line 27, change to “a minimum stipend of \$20,000.

The repayment of the scholarship needs an exception along with the medical exception. The amendment would read on Page 18, line 23, insert the following after “medical reasons” - “, or if the recipient’s individual contract to teach is not renewed by the local board. If a recipient is required to repay the scholarship, the amount of payment shall be pro-rated based on the number of years that the recipient completed their service obligation.”

Many teachers on probation (which is 3 years) often have their contracts non-renewed for no fault of their own and they have little to no recourse in challenging the non-renewal. These teachers should not be required to repay the entire scholarship.

Again, AFT-MD supports this important legislation with these two amendments. We ask for a favorable report on SB 893. Thank you.