

SB 352 Anita Bass testimony.pdf

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Position: FAV



SB 352 - SUPPORT
Anita Bass

SB 352 - SUPPORT
Maryland County Public Library Systems'
Employee Collective Bargaining Rights

February 16, 2023

Good afternoon Chairwoman Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, distinguished members of the Finance Committee, as well as Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and distinguished members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee.

My name is Anita Bass. I had the pleasure of testifying before many of you during the 2021 session when I spoke in favor of the collective bargaining legislation for Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL). I come before you as the first Local Lodge President of BCPL-IAM United.

Having the ability to form a union and negotiate our first contract wasn't easy. BCPL staff worked with the IAM for three years. A large part of this extended timeline was having to pass legislation before we could hope to file for a union election. We had the interest among the staff, but we didn't have a legal process to be able to bargain an enforceable contract addressing our wages, hours, and working conditions.

In our first contract, we negotiated wage increases, improved benefits for our part-time staff, and created a Labor-Management Committee to address issues in the workplace. Having a union isn't a promise of perfection, but it is an avenue for staff to have a voice and participate in the process.

Now, we are in the midst of negotiating our second contract. It has been a learning process for both the union and management, but we are committed to working together for the best library system possible.

Senate Bill 352 will provide a uniform and consistent process for my colleagues in other county library systems to organize for collective bargaining rights, if they so choose. Library workers without an interest in organizing a union will not be affected.

Libraries are cornerstones of our communities. Our work goes beyond helping a patron find a book. As frontline service providers we have an important perspective. Union representation gives us a seat at the table and an avenue to make the library better for our employees and the customers.

Unionizing may not be what every library system wants. That's fine. SB 352 doesn't make libraries union unless and until they choose to organize and win an election. For those systems who want to become union, SB 352 removes the need to repeat this legislative process piece by piece, county by county, session after session, over and over again.

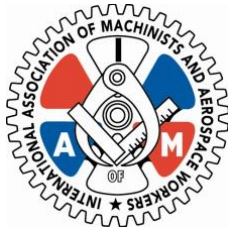
On behalf of library workers across Maryland, I ask you to vote favorable on Senate Bill 352.

Thank you for your consideration and time.

b fitzgerald letter support.pdf

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Position: FAV



SB 352 - SUPPORT
BRIDGET FITZGERALD
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
bfitzgerald@iamaw.org | (301) 213-4189

SB 352 - SUPPORT
Maryland County Public Library Systems'
Employee Collective Bargaining Rights

February 16, 2023

To the honorable Chairpersons, Vice Chairs and members of the Senate Finance Committee and the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee.

My name is Bridget Fitzgerald. I am a union organizer with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). I have testified before this committee in previous sessions to help public library workers pass enabling legislation for collective bargaining rights. I'm honored to be able to submit written testimony in favor of Senate Bill 352 (SB 352).

In 2019, I was asked to meet with a group of library workers from Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL). They had questions about what a union does and how it would apply to their workplace. We met for what was a very long and detailed conversation. That began my association with library workers and the inner-workings of the public library system.

The BCPL campaign received a lot of attention. There were stories in the paper, social media traffic and conversations between colleagues in different library systems. As a result, I began receiving calls from library workers from other county library systems looking for similar help. In response, the IAM sought a way to help all unorganized library systems through statewide legislation.

We understood that statewide library legislation, would require a bill to incorporate language that would work for the counties. So, our Research Department and our Legal Department took an extensive look at how collective bargaining was handled in counties across the state. They also looked at the library collective bargaining laws already in effect, and of course the standard practices in labor law. The language contained within SB 352 is the result of that work.

As an organizer, I would have liked the most worker-friendly bill possible. For example, I don't believe workers should be restricted to filing for an election in one specific month. However, I was told by the bill drafters that most counties have a specified month; therefore, the most responsible approach would be to incorporate that into SB 352 to be uniform with the majority of the counties. This logical approach is what makes SB 352 a bill that will enable workers to unionize for the purposes of collective bargaining, while allowing the employer to manage the library system, the Board of Trustees to maintain their oversight and fiduciary responsibilities and includes timelines to adhere to county budgetary processes.

It's hard to please everyone when it comes to collective bargaining. Both parties want more... workers want forming a union to be easier, while employers want it be more difficult and believe they should more control. The purpose of collective bargaining laws are to define a fair process to establish interest in have a union election, the process by which that election is conducted and the steps to make negotiating collective bargaining agreements possible. SB 352 does just that.

SB 352 Favorable
B Fitzgerlad

Library employees across the state love the work they do and the communities they serve; but they also want to have the option to form a union in order to have a voice. I respectfully request you help them by issuing a favorable report on SB 352.

Thank you,

Bridget Fitzgerald

Maryland Voter, District 30B

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S.B. 352 Favorable

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee and
Maryland Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 16, 2023
S.B 352 Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining**

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jaimie Caldwell, I am a Maryland voter, I grew up using the Harford County Public Library, and still frequent their branches and use their resources. I started my career in librarianship at Enoch Pratt Free Library under the leadership of Carla Hayden, and now work for Baltimore County Public Library. Libraries have been instrumental in my development as a child and teen, and have provided me a stable career in social justice. I support SB 352, as it will make Maryland libraries stronger, more equitable, and better equipped to meet the needs of their employees, thus making the library better equipped to meet the needs of the community.

Sincerely,

Jaimie Caldwell

SB 352 Malerich written.pdf

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Position: FAV

Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee and
Maryland Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 16, 2023
S.B 352 Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining

I'm writing to express my support, as a library worker, to extend collective bargaining rights to all public library workers in Maryland.

It's not often acknowledged in the wider community that we are not only providers of information, but also caregivers and social workers. The "librarian" (who may not even have a degree in Library Science) is frequently the most consistent and reliable presence in the life of isolated and vulnerable members of our community. For seniors with limited mobility, for adolescents who need a safe place to go outside school, for people experiencing homelessness, the library is a refuge with no price of admission or embarrassing intake process.

For all the importance of maintaining this space and the books and resources in it, library workers receive very little institutional support. I know because I have worked in public libraries since 1999, and at Arlington Public Libraries in Virginia since 2007. Now more than ever our wages don't keep pace with inflation, while new duties are added to our job description at the drop of a pin (distributing Covid tests, acting as tech tutors and troubleshooters for online learning, and de-escalating anti-LGBTQ+ demonstrations, to name a few). Three of my coworkers have been homeless themselves, unable to afford rent in the DMV, while others have to choose between continuing to work and paying most of their income to childcare, or quitting and raising a family on a spouse's income. 80 of my coworkers were summarily furloughed in 2020; of these, the 20 with a professional degree were laid off one year later with a mass email that their "services would no longer be needed."

Like others in the helping professions, library workers experience stress and trauma when our patrons bring their own pain through our doors.¹ And like other care workers, we have felt

¹ Albanese, Andrew. "Groundbreaking Study Explores Trauma, Stress in Frontline Library Workers." Publishers Weekly. <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/89798-groundbreaking-new-study-explores-trauma-stress-in-frontline-library-workers.html>. July 07, 2022. Accessed Dec 14, 2022.

S.B. 352 Favorable

unprecedented levels of job burnout in the years since Covid-19.² The best way to combat this? Make it easy to unionize. Unionization breaks the social isolation that characterizes burnout. Having a say in one's schedule, workload, assignments, pay, and benefits, supported by a collective bargaining agreement and a clear grievance process, fosters the sense of control and autonomy that a healthy worker needs.³

Library workers should have this right fully recognized and guaranteed under state law. In Virginia, the state assembly has taken a similar piecemeal approach that Maryland is taking, requiring library workers to work through a local legislative process before even holding a union election. In Arlington this has set us back years in the unionization process. For overwhelmed librarians who need relief and hope now, that's untenable. But my colleagues in Maryland could get the support that my coworkers and I in Virginia haven't had, if the General Assembly passes the proposed bill.

Sincerely,
Charlotte Malerich

Views expressed are my own and do not represent that of my employer.

² Abramson, Ashley. "Burnout and stress are everywhere." American Psychological Association. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642>. January 1, 2022. Accessed Dec 14, 2022.

³ "Job burnout: How to spot it and take action." Mayo Clinic Staff. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642>. Accessed Dec 14, 2022.

SB 352 Vangrin Written Testimony 2023[1].pdf

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Position: FAV

Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee and
Maryland Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 16, 2023
S.B 352 Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining

My name is Bethany Vangrin, and I am a resident of Harford County. For the past 16 years, I have proudly worked for the Harford County Public Library and currently hold the position of Children's Librarian at the Bel Air Branch. I'm writing to voice my support for Senate Bill 352 in favor of collective bargaining for the State of Maryland public libraries.

During my tenure with Harford County Public Library, I've had the pleasure to serve on statewide library book award committees, present at several Maryland Library Association annual conferences, and participate in numerous statewide trainings and meetings. Through these opportunities, I have met and witnessed the dedicated staff working to better their customer's experiences within public libraries across Maryland.

The public library is where the public goes for informational needs or their next book to read, but we also provide enrichment, education, and enjoyment for all ages. Day in and day out, library workers provide valuable services to all who visit a local library branch and beyond. In Harford County alone, a library visitor can apply for a US Passport, discover 3D printing with their child, explore their ancestors in our local history room, and check out a ukulele, all without leaving the walls of the Bel Air Library. Throughout a visit to a library branch, the public will encounter a library employee who will use their experience and expertise to make the customer's visit successful. However, the lack of legislation prevents the same library employee, who used their training and education to assist the library visitor, from exercising their Constitutional right to form a union and collectively bargain without a lengthy legislative process.

The time is right for the passage of SB 352. As workers in the public sector, many library employees struggle to have their voices heard by their administration. We encounter more and more pressure to accomplish work duties with less support due to the elimination of positions and resources. For instance, in the Harford County system alone, our library system has eliminated the Children's and Teen Coordinator, the Volunteer Coordinator, and Programming Specialist within the past five years. The loss of these positions has added stress on employees as tasks from the vacant positions are reallocated to lower-level positions without compensation or reevaluation of job descriptions. For instance, in 2019, I was asked to fill in as the Acting Chairperson of the system's Early Literacy Team due to the Children's and Teen Coordinator

S.B. 352 Favorable

vacancy. It's 2023, and I still serve as the team's "acting" chairperson with no end date in sight. Although I am dedicated to leading this team, it does unfairly add responsibilities and duties to my workload. It may be too late to reinstate the eliminated positions. However, the passing of this collective bargaining legislation allows public library employees to have a voice in future decisions impacting their workload.

A union is the best pathway to allowing employees' voices to be heard. I am asking for a favorable report on SB 352 to ensure the right to unionize and collectively bargain for public library employees across the State of Maryland.

Thank you for your time.
Bethany Vangrin

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Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee and
Maryland Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 16, 2023
S.B 352 Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining

I'm writing to express my support, as a charter school teacher, for extending collective bargaining rights to all public library workers in Maryland. As a fellow education worker without a union to represent my interests, I understand on a personal level just how badly library workers in Maryland need collective bargaining rights. Public school teachers, and many other library workers across the country, won collective bargaining rights decades ago. There is no excuse to force library workers into jumping through local hoops every time they want to even decide if they want a union to represent them. For all the importance of maintaining libraries and the books and resources in them, library workers receive very little institutional support. Now more than ever their wages don't keep pace with inflation, while new duties are added to their job description at the drop of a pin (distributing Covid tests, acting as tech tutors and troubleshooters for online learning, and de-escalating anti-LGBTQ+ demonstrations, to name a few). Like others in the caring professions, library workers experience stress and trauma when patrons bring their own pain through library doors.¹ And like other care workers, they have felt unprecedented levels of job burnout in the years since Covid-19.² The best way to combat this? Make it easy to unionize. Unionization breaks the social isolation that characterizes burnout. Having a say in one's schedule, workload, assignments, pay, and benefits, supported by a collective bargaining agreement and a clear grievance process, fosters the sense of control and autonomy that a healthy worker needs.²

¹ Albanese, Andrew. "Groundbreaking Study Explores Trauma, Stress in Frontline Library Workers." Publishers Weekly. <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/libraries/article/89798groundbreaking-new-study-explores-trauma-stress-in-frontline-library-workers.html>. July 07, 2022. Accessed Dec 14, 2022. ² Abramson, Ashley. "Burnout and stress are everywhere." American Psychological Association. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642>. January 1, 2022. Accessed Dec 14, 2022.

² "Job burnout: How to spot it and take action." Mayo Clinic Staff. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/burnout/art-20046642>. Accessed Dec 14, 2022.

S.B. 352 Favorable

As a charter school worker, I deal with many of the same issues library workers do. I believe that an injury to one is an injury to all, so even though I do not work in public libraries, I feel their pain and strongly urge for collective bargaining rights to be extended to ALL public library workers in Maryland.

Sincerely,
Chase Zaslannya

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Position: FAV

Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee and
Maryland Education, Energy and the Environment Committee
February 16, 2023
S.B 352 Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining

Honorable Senators,

My name is Colleen Martin and though my residence is in Pennsylvania and I am thus not a Maryland voter, my ties to the state run deep. I married into a family with roots in Harford County that span generations and I have been an employee of the Harford County Public Library for almost 20 years. Because I'm one of the few people within HCPL with that kind of tenure, I'm also one of the few who remember what the system was like before the current administration came to power more than a decade ago. I can say unequivocally that the changes these administrators have implemented without staff or public input regarding the way our library operates have been detrimental to our standing in the community. I firmly believe that, had staff been afforded the respect they deserve and empowered to participate in the decision-making process throughout the years, we would not find ourselves in such dire straits. That is why I'm writing to you today, to ask that you support Senate Bill 0352– Public Libraries – Collective Bargaining.

HCPL staff have a deep sense of pride in the high level of service we provide to our patrons in all manner of inquiries, but we are being hamstrung in our ability to do our jobs by our own administration. We once had the autonomy to entice people to our individual branches by offering programs and services catered specifically to that community's needs, but those creative freedoms have been taken from us, the tasks centralized and mandated by a small group of people with no library background or experience in program development. Decades upon decades of collective staff knowledge matter for naught – in fact, nearly a quarter of staff (mostly those that work in branches) were recently demoted and told that they had been “overvalued” by the previous administration.

Because of this stifling atmosphere, the system has been hemorrhaging workers, a crisis that predated the COVID-19 pandemic by several years. Employees leave, either through retirement (early or otherwise) or resignation, as quickly as administration can fill vacancies. I cannot stress enough how unusual this is. HCPL used to have a reputation as one of the top library systems not only in the state but in the country, and job openings were rare and highly coveted. The fact that turnover has sky-rocketed as it has in the last ten years and we can no longer count on people staying for any length of time is telling.

S.B. 352 Favorable

The few of us who remain and remember a time before the disastrous changes the current administration has implemented are finding our situations more and more untenable. We have gone to our Board of Trustees, which ostensibly oversees library operations and the administrators, to ask for help, but they merely pay lip-service to hearing our grievances. We have no true recourse to affect change and instead are told, "If you don't like it here, then leave." But we don't want to leave. We know how vital a public library is to its community; we know what we can accomplish when all branches and departments work in harmony with each other. But the only way to reestablish that equilibrium within Harford County Public Library is to ensure that we employees have a voice. And the only way to ensure that we have a voice is to pass SB 0352. Please help us accomplish this.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Colleen Martin

lil_red_ccc@hotmail.com

SB352_MSEA_Gobel_FAV_FIN.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 352
Education – Public Libraries – Collective Bargaining**

**Finance Committee
February 16, 2023**

**Christian Gobel
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 352. Senate Bill 352 grants employees of certain public libraries the freedom to form, join, and participate in an employee organization and to engage in activities related to collective bargaining. MSEA supports all legislation that expands and enhances collective bargaining rights for public employees. MSEA stands in solidarity with all unions in the labor movement to build worker power and ensure that all workers have a voice in their workplace.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3 million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Senate Bill 352 is common sense legislation to promote workers' rights for employees of certain public libraries. The bill enables employees to engage in protected concerted activities for their mutual aid and protection, prohibits employers and employee organizations from engaging in certain unfair labor practices, establishes election procedures for the certification of exclusive representatives, and requires good faith bargaining between employers and certified exclusive representatives concerning wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment.

MSEA strongly believes that communities, government, the public, and workers benefit through the practice and procedure of collective bargaining. Enabling



workers to have a voice in their workplace and working conditions enhances the delivery of public services, creates a more stable and healthier workforce, and allows labor and management to address potential disputes in a responsible and efficient manner for the benefit of all. For these reasons, MSEA will always stand in solidarity with workers who seek the right to join unions and engage in collective bargaining. We urge passage of this legislation and look forward to welcoming these workers into the broader Maryland labor movement.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 352.

SB 352 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

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President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**SB 352 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining
Senate Finance Committee
February 16, 2023**

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 352 as currently written. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 provided millions of workers with the right to form unions and collectively bargain with their employers. It also established that the official policy of the United States was to promote collective bargaining and worker organizing. This was recently re-established by President Joe Biden, who issued Executive Order 14025, which stated, "the policy of the United States is to encourage worker organizing and collective bargaining and to promote equality of bargaining power between employers and employees." Unfortunately, millions of workers were left out from the National Labor Relations Act, leaving them without a legal process for their human right to form a union. Those excluded workers include thousands of public sector library workers across the state of Maryland.

House Bill 65 grants collective bargaining rights to public library workers across the state. It establishes an equitable process for workers to democratically select exclusive representatives that can bargain with employers over terms and conditions of employment. SB 352 does not require library workers to join a union, but creates a fair process with neutral arbiters, to certify representatives if the workers choose to unionize.

Past bills granting public library workers union rights focused on single counties or library systems, but this disjointed approach is time consuming and treats workers' essential rights like something they need to beg for from the state of Maryland before they can exercise it. SB 352 makes it clear that the State of Maryland values the rights of public library workers to exercise their freedom. SB 352 does not change the labor laws for library systems that already have collective bargaining, like those of Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Baltimore City (Enoch Pratt), and Baltimore County.



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Donna S. Edwards

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Gerald W. Jackson

Collective bargaining is an important tool for workers in the fight for equity, social justice, and inclusion. Library workers are overwhelmingly women. The AFL-CIO's Department of Professional Employees (DPE) analyzed 2020 Census Bureau data and found that over 83% of librarians were women. Even within the profession women have been discriminated against in terms of pay and benefits, with women earning only 81.5% of what men in the same positions made. Union contracts are an essential part of the fight against the gender pay gap, helping to ensure that workers receive equal pay for equal work. DPE reported that union librarians earned around \$284 more per week than their non-union counterparts.

Maryland library workers have shown tremendous interest in organizing unions. Workers at Baltimore County Public Libraries voted to approve their first collective bargaining agreement in May 2022. Just a few months ago, workers at the Enoch Pratt Library System in Baltimore City voted 218-12 in favor of forming a union.

This bill sends a strong message to public library workers that their rights are respected and they have the freedom, supported by their state, to join together in a union and negotiate with their employers if they so choose.

We strongly encourage legislators to support SB 352 as written.

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Uploaded by: Dyana Forester

Position: FAV



Metro Washington Labor Council, AFL-CIO

815 Black Lives Matter Plaza NW • Washington, DC 20006 • 202-974-8150 • 202-974-8152 fax
An AFL-CIO "Union City"

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Gina Walton (AFGE 1975)

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Djava Hall (1199 SEIU)

Tim Traylor (AFSCME 2250)

Dave Richardson (AFGE 12)

31 January 2023

Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier and august members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of the 150,000 active and retired members of the Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO (MWC), I come before you today urging your support for **Maryland S.B. 0352** legislation that would enable Maryland's county public library workers to organize for collective bargaining rights. Unfortunately, current state laws do not provide such a pathway for thousands in the state's workforce to exercise their constitutional right to join a union.

Collective bargaining is not only necessary because it is a constitutional right. It also provides pathways for workers to work their way into America's Middle Class. In addition, workers can access better healthcare, paid family leave, and other benefits that help support themselves and their families. Not only does Collective Bargaining Agreements improve wages and benefits but studies show how they also improve Diversity and Inclusion outcomes for underrepresented such as women and minorities.

Recently, the AFL-CIO reported on the newly released union membership data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2022, 16 million people became union workers with an increase of 273,000 people from the previous year. Furthermore, union membership became more diverse: the entire increase in unionization was amongst workers of color. Of all minority groups, black workers continue to have the highest unionization rates.

As stated by Senator King and the Brothers and Sisters of the Machinists Union, this legislation does not guarantee union organizing or require library employees to form a union. Instead, it provides currently unorganized workers the necessary steps to show interest in a vote to have union representation, should they wish to do so.

Librarians in Prince George's County represented by my home union UFCW and those in Baltimore County represented by the Machinists have proven the need for such legislation. I ask that members of this esteemed committee grant the same access to all librarians across the state.

In closing, I urge you all to vote favorably on S.B 0352 and give unorganized county public library workers the option to bargain collectively. Thank you.

Bringing Labor Together Since 1896
www.dclabor.org

SB 352, FAV, OCE Testimony, JF, LS23.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Fitzwater

Position: FAV



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

SB 352 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining

DATE: February 16, 2023
COMMITTEE: Senate Finance Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

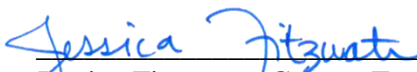
As the County Executive of Frederick County, I urge the committee to give **SB 352 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining** a favorable report.

This bill establishes a collective bargaining process for full or part-time nonmanagement employees of public library systems in Maryland. Our constitution expresses the right for employees to collectively bargain but there are no current laws in Maryland that outline the process of doing so for library employees. SB352 addresses this gap.

Our library staff are hardworking, dedicated public servants who bring needed resources to our constituents. Should they wish to unionize, it is prudent for the state to have established a process that makes this efficient and not cumbersome. Several counties have seen their library systems organize and have had to address the gap in state policy around a collective bargaining process by passing various versions of legislation or Charter amendments. Without state guidance, each jurisdiction will likely have a different process for collective bargaining, creating a complicated patchwork of policies across the state that will not benefit employees or employers.

Public libraries serve a critical role in our communities, providing access to information, internet, meeting space, educational and cultural programs, and more. Public library staff are not only responsible for helping residents access these resources but are also often on the frontlines of public health and safety issues, responding to crises such as opioid overdoses, or distributing COVID tests and masks. In Frederick County, our library staff were also critical partners in standing up our COVID vaccination efforts. These employees are essential members of our public service team and have the right to collectively bargain as employees.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 352 and I urge a favorable report on SB 352.

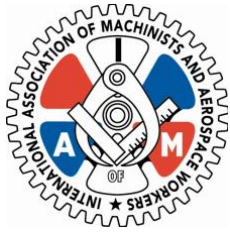


Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD

SB 352 Ewan Testimony Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Ewan

Position: FAV



SB 352 - SUPPORT

Laura Ewan

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

lewan@iamaw.org | (301) 967-4510

SB 352 - SUPPORT
Maryland County Public Library Systems'
Employee Collective Bargaining Rights

January 31, 2023

My name is Laura Ewan, and I am Associate General Counsel for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). I am honored to be here today speaking to you about SB 352, a crucial piece of legislation that will grant the employees of many of Maryland's County Public Library Systems the right to select a representative of their choosing to bargain on their behalf for their wages, hours, and working conditions.

In Maryland, each county library system exists as a creature of state statute. State law governing library structure and operations allows for boards of trustees or county governments to operate library systems and set wages, hours, and working conditions. However, the state laws do not automatically grant these entities the right to enter into binding collective bargaining agreements **absent a grant of such authority from the legislature**. That's what SB 352 would do—grant that authority to each County's Library employing authority to enter into a collective bargaining agreement, should the Library employees vote to be represented by a union.

For some historical perspective, Prince Georges County Library System, Montgomery County Library System, Baltimore County Public Library System, Howard County Library System, and the Enoch Pratt Library System have all undertaken individual steps to allow for their library employees to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining. But having to do this on a county-by-county basis across Maryland is ineffective, inefficient, and ultimately asking for inconsistencies in how Library employees gain representation.

Following the success of the Baltimore County Public Library Collective Bargaining law in 2021, the IAM was contacted by library workers from county library systems across Maryland, each looking for help in their workplaces. So, it just makes sense—for your busy schedules, and for these employees—to address the issue statewide. SB 352 does just that.

Before drafting SB 352, we examined existing collective bargaining laws across Maryland counties, the collective bargaining laws previously passed for county library systems, as well as long-standing labor standards. The most common components are included in SB 352, because years of experience as a labor law attorney and drafting multiple pieces of legislation has taught me the best practice is to be as consistent and straight-forward as possible. As a result, SB 352 borrows its language from county labor codes and the most recently-enacted collective bargaining law. It also excludes counties where union representation already exists, so as to not change what is currently working in those counties.

Employees who work so hard to provide the numerous services that our libraries offer to the community want a voice in the conversations about the direction of the workplace. They want a seat at the table because they love their jobs. And they want meaningful representation to ensure that it stays that way. That is why we enthusiastically support this bill.

Ultimately, SB 352 strikes a balance between protecting workers' Constitutional right to freedom of association with the library administration's obligation to manage the library system in a way most appropriate to their individual communities. Workers choosing to try to unionize are guaranteed anonymity in demonstrating support for a secret-ballot election to be held in a timely manner. If their election is successful, SB 352 provides next steps for negotiating collective bargaining agreement to be ratified by the employees.

In reading SB 352, you will note management retains their right to exercise control and discretion over the library's operations, direct its employees and all that entails, determine the methods, means, personnel and resources, hire, promote, transfer, and so on. The Board of Trustees maintains its authority regarding the financial oversight and approval of a tentative agreement before it is finalized. And SB 352 imposes deadlines to resolving negotiation issues at impasse in order for collective bargaining agreements to comply with county budgetary processes. So you see, a great deal of research and thought went into drafting SB 352 to ensure that the roles of each party are respected.

Maryland library employees need this bill passed just to have the opportunity to vote to see if they want to have a representative for collective bargaining purposes. Every single library employee we have spoken to sees this as an opportunity to make the job they love even better. These workers provide critical social and cultural services to Maryland residents, and all they ask is for the opportunity to have a collective voice at the table.

We ask you to vote in favor of SB 352 so library employees across Maryland can have the legal right and the freedom to choose whether they wish to be represented by a union or not for the purposes of collective bargaining.

Thank you.

SB 352 Morgan Michael testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Morgan Michael

Position: FAV



SB 352 - SUPPORT
Morgan Michael

SB 352 - SUPPORT
Maryland County Public Library Systems'
Employee Collective Bargaining Rights

February 16, 2023

Good afternoon Chairwoman Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, distinguished members of the Finance Committee, as well as Chairman Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and distinguished members of the Education, Energy and Environment Committee.

I am here today to urge your support of Senate Bill 352 (SB 352) as it was submitted.

I have worked as a Library Associate in an unorganized system for almost sixteen years, and am proud of my work and the communities I serve. But, my system is not the stellar organization it once was.

Changes have been made to the system's structure that leave voids in our service models, lower staff morale, or result in talented people leaving. Many of these issues existed before the pandemic.

Last session, my coworkers and I worked with Delegate Steve Johnson and the IAM to pass enabling legislation. Our own county delegation suggested working directly with the board and administrators to promote change without collective bargaining. We tried. Imagine our disappointment when our board easily dismissed our concerns, and the Chairman stated they did not want to become a "suggestion box." We didn't feel heard.

My system is broken, but we're hopeful that it can be fixed. I'm confident that mine isn't the only broken system, and I am not the only hopeful library worker. To protect and preserve our libraries, all across the state, workers need a seat at their table. A voice in the room. We need to be regarded and respected as experts in our fields, alongside our administrators. The passing of SB 352 will do just that for the systems that need it, be it right now, or in the far future.

I call on you to assist library workers by issuing a favorable report for this collective bargaining bill.

Thank you for letting me speak today.

Mrs. Morgan Michael

SB352 IP Martinez.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Martinez Jr

Position: FAV

**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

Area Code 301-967-4500

OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

February 2, 2023

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 600,000 members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), **I write to you today urging your support for H.B.65/S.B.0352, a pro-worker bipartisan bill that would give Maryland's unorganized county library workers the right to organize for collective bargaining rights, if they wish to do so.** Unfortunately, the current Maryland state laws **do not** provide such a pathway for thousands of library employees across the state to exercise their constitutional right to join a union.

Library workers are some of the most highly-regarded public servants across Maryland. They put their community first, and are a valuable asset to our school systems. It's the task of this state legislature to honor that great commitment with the passage of H.B. 65/ S.B. 0352.

Collective bargaining offers a voice in the workplace and the decision-making process. It allows for better collaboration with management, while ensuring workers receive the dignity and respect they deserve for all they do. This proposed legislation, S.B. 0352, sponsored by Majority Leader Sen. Nancy J. King (D-39), would provide a consistent process for employees of unorganized public library systems in Maryland to form a union and to collectively bargain. Del. Steve Johnson (D-34A) co-sponsored the legislation (H.B. 65) in the House of Delegates.

This legislation does not guarantee union organizing or require library system employees to form a union. The H.B.65/ S.B.0352 simply provides currently unorganized workers the necessary steps to show interest for a vote to have union representation, should they wish to do so.

The IAM, headquartered in Upper Marlboro, MD., proudly represents a very diverse workforce in North America, which includes about 460 workers of the Baltimore County Public Library (BCPL) system. The group, which organized with the IAM, ratified a first collective bargaining agreement in 2022. **The BCPL workers only gained this right because the IAM was successful with getting state legislation passed in 2021 that enabled the BCPL workers the right to collectively bargain.**

Library workers' ability to exercise their right to join a union in the state of Maryland should not be based on the county system in which they work, but instead on the universally-recognized right to freedom of association. This freedom should be available to any library worker who wishes to seek the option.

The plight of BCPL workers seeking a pathway to organize also gained the attention of President Joe Biden, who invited an IAM-BCPL member to speak before the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment.

Again, I write to you today to request you support H.B. 65/ S.B. 0352 and give unorganized county public library workers the option to collectively bargain.

If you have any questions, please contact IAM Legislative & Political Director Hasan Solomon at (301) 967-4575 or hsolomon@iamaw.org.

Sincerely,

Robert Martinez, Jr.
International President

SB352 Sponsor Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Nancy King

Position: FAV

NANCY J. KING
Legislative District 39
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER

Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair
Education, Business and
Administration Subcommittee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SB 352 – Education – Public Libraries – Collective Bargaining

February 16, 2023

Madame Chair and Members of the Finance Committee:

Senate Bill 352 is a bill about rights, choice, and equity.

Public libraries are the jewels of our counties. Our citizens appreciate their value and take full advantage of the services they offer. Although our public libraries are managed by Boards of Trustees, the bulk of their funding comes from taxpayer funds and makes library employees part of the public sector.

Senate Bill 352 is about rights. Library workers in the vast majority of Maryland's counties do not have the same rights as other public sector employees to collective bargaining. Teachers, firefighters, police, public works employees all have the ability to collectively bargain for wages, benefits, working conditions, working hours and continuation of services. Senate Bill 352 will give library employees those same rights.

This bill is also about choice. While Senate Bill 352 will establish the right to collectively bargain, it will also establish the choice of entering into a collective bargaining agreement. The library employees of each county can make the choice of whether or not they want to enter into a collective bargaining agreement.

And finally, this bill is about equity. Over eighty percent of library workers in our state are women and a large majority of these women are professionals with post-secondary and master's degrees. They along with their male counterparts are dedicated professionals who provide a great service to our communities. They deserve the same equal treatment and representation on the job that is afforded to other public sector employees.

Senate Bill 352 is about rights, choices, and equity. Our library workers deserve no less.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 352.

SB0352-FIN_MACo_OPP.pdf

Uploaded by: Brianna January

Position: UNF



Senate Bill 352

Education – Public Libraries – Collective Bargaining

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Finance and Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committees

Date: February 16, 2023

From: Brianna January

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** SB 352. This bill would establish a uniform statewide collective bargaining process for public library employees.

Counties oppose the one-size-fits-all approach of SB 352, which limits local decision-making. To date, jurisdictions seeking to bargain collectively have pursued single-county legislation, but SB 352 takes those provisions statewide without local input. This would create potentially unsustainable costs for counties, who provide substantial funding for public libraries and the myriad community services they provide throughout Maryland—especially since the legislation does not envision any added State support.

Maryland’s libraries do it all: they support early literacy, create collaborative spaces, connect Marylanders to technology, foster community engagement, prepare Maryland’s kids for K-12 learning, assist residents with workforce development, and serve as central resource hubs for families. Unfortunately, SB 352 could lead to a rollback of these critical functions at a time when access to these free and low-cost services is most needed. Alternatively, this bill might force some library systems to start charging Maryland residents for these services, shifting burdens onto many whose ability to pay is limited.

Current state laws include distinct collective bargaining processes for public library systems in several jurisdictions that have “opted in” to collective bargaining. As partners in the network of public libraries serving the state’s residents, county governments and library governing boards should retain the right to make labor and budgetary decisions that best suit the unique needs and capabilities of the communities they serve.

Counties are proud to support their public libraries. However, the State-imposed system and costs of SB 352 – with no additional State funding – are simply not feasible and could pose substantial budget difficulties for counties. Because this legislation would not provide local flexibility in the decision to allow collective bargaining at county public libraries, nor provide additional State support, MACo **OPPOSES** SB 352 and recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report.