



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