

Written Testimony Submitted for the House Appropriations Committee
Testimony of Mackenzie Naveran
HB 609 –The Library Workers Empowerment Act
February 13th, 2024

SUPPORT

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang, and Members of the House Appropriations:

My name is Mackenzie Naveran, and I work in Digital Experience at the Headquarters of the Anne Arundel County Public Library System. I am a part-time hourly employee, part of the hundreds that keep the system operating. Yet, my job requirements are often higher than the hours I am allowed to work. This causes me enormous stress, not only for myself, but for the system, which needs my job to continue to function digitally. Though now I can make suggestions, those suggestions have not been enough. Collective bargaining is the answer.

Having the ability to have an open conversation with my supervisors would allow me to prove why my job requires more hours and deserves fair benefits. We have two incomes in my household and our monthly rent is on the lower side of what's available for this area, and still, we're just barely making it. With my additional health issues, having benefits could help alleviate some of the financial and emotional stress of having to afford treatment.

Libraries are the backbone to the public. We don't only offer books and information, we provide services for free that our community greatly needs; impoverished and wealthy alike. Our ability to be involved in decision making and policies is vital to improve the library systems because we're at the front lines seeing what's necessary. With collective bargaining rights, we'll have the ability to step in and make those decisions that are best for us and ultimately, best for the community. Please pass HB 609, and give me the ability to advocate on behalf of my system, on behalf of myself, and on behalf of Anne Arundel County.

Mackenzie Naveran
Digital Experience
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