

**Written Testimony Submitted for the House Appropriations Committee**  
**Testimony of Karen Isaac**  
**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 Karen Isaac, and I am a Circulation Assistant at the Eastport Annapolis Branch of Anne Arundel County Public Libraries. I have worked in AACPL for nearly forty years. I have seen administrations come and go, policies change and shift, and needs grow. The changes that have come to the libraries over the last few decades demand a shift. We need fair treatment, equitable rights, and a fair process to address our grievances. These things can be accomplished through collective bargaining, a right that can be granted by passing HB 609.

My hope would be that through collective bargaining, we could let administrations across the state know that our libraries are under threat. That they need a strong staff to protect them, and that a strong staff can only be built when they have a strong buy-in to the place they work. Nothing can better accomplish this than collective bargaining. We are ready to partner with our administrations to build a resilient system. We are ready to bargain. Please pass this legislation to allow us to start.

Karen Isaac  
Circulation Assistant  
AACPL