

Written Testimony Submitted for the House Appropriations Committee
Testimony of Brad Noble, member, AFSCME Maryland
HB 260 – AN ACT concerning State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Supervisory
Employees
January 26th, 2024

SUPPORT

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

My name is Sabra Mastalski and I am a proud member of AFSCME. I ask you to support HB 260. I've worked at the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Parole and Probation, for 12 years.

As a supervisor I want to be able to support my staff and be part of a team improving our workplaces and our state services. Without collective bargaining rights and a protected voice in our workplaces, it is difficult to do that. As supervisors we are often directed to abide by policies or procedures by executive leadership and tasked with trying to get buy-in from field staff when we see gaps in efficiency and practicality in the policies being implemented. Some of these procedures we're asked to implement and enforce are not in alignment and contradict current policies or general orders in place. These conflicts cause stress in the workplace and fosters mistrust between our teams and leadership.

I often feel like my hands are tied and that I have no way to advocate for myself or other supervisors. I'm not able to make decisions about the policies or procedures I'm being asked to enforce, or even have a space to negotiate over them. It makes it difficult to be effective in doing my job. Our only recourse as supervisors is to raise issues through our chain of command, yet again and again we are told to follow the directives being issued, and aren't given the space to join management at the bargaining table and find solutions that work best for our colleagues and ourselves.

If we want to improve workplace culture and morale in our agencies, we as supervisors need to be able to have a protected voice at work and the ability to negotiate over our working conditions and policies. We're ready to be teammates in making our state agencies better, and to do the work that needs to be done to retain staff and address the staffing crisis we're all facing. Please support HB 260 and pass collective bargaining rights for supervisors.

Sabra Mastalski
Assistant Regional Administrator, DPSCS Parole and Probation