



February 9, 2024

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Mark S. Chang
Vice Chair, Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Barnes and Vice Chair Chang,

I would like to express my full support for *House Bill 609 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining (Library Workers Empowerment Act)*.

Unions are the backbone of the American workforce. Studies have shown that the unionization of a workforce directly leads to higher wages, decreased income inequality, smaller wage gaps, and a more diverse workforce. Additionally, the benefits that workers derive from their union membership lead to a healthier community as those benefits, like health insurance, are typically better quality and more accessible to employees whose workplace has an established union. Unions are able to fight for better conditions because of their power in numbers, and every worker in this country deserves the chance to bargain as a collective unit.

The Library Workers Empowerment Act will expand the right to collective bargaining to certain supervisory State employees who have not had this right in the past. Every union, whether they are made up of firefighters, State employees, or university employees, deserves the right to wield their collective weight when negotiating for better working conditions, and it is time for librarians and other library staff to enjoy these same rights.

I strongly urge this committee to give *House Bill 609 - Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining (Library Workers Empowerment Act)* the highest consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Trone".

David Trone
Member of Congress