

Written Testimony Submitted for the House Appropriations Committee
Testimony of Jeremy Smith, 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 Jeremy Smith and I have worked for the state of Maryland for nearly 16 years. Currently I serve as a Lieutenant with the Eastern Correctional Institute. Today I am writing in support of H.B. 260, which would grant collective bargaining to supervisors across the state.

As a frontline worker and supervisor I've watched the state go through a variety of challenges. In the current state of things, supervisors work alongside other state employees, sharing responsibilities and often shouldering extra burdens in our role as supervisors. Yet we lack the same seat at the table that has been afforded to those employees. That seat has proven integral to achieving fair and equitable treatment on the job and supervisors deserve that same treatment as well.

Often we take initiative to cover for shortages in staffing for the safety and wellbeing of all, but when we do we are not protected by the same rights the employees we are covering for have. Whether it be unique comp time restrictions, health and safety issues, or even addressing the very staff shortage issues that drew us away from our families in the first place, there are many aspects of our work we could improve through bargaining, and as supervisors we're ready to work with the state to identify solutions.

We do the same work, often with twice the responsibility, but never with the voice afforded to others in those positions. For these reasons, I urge you to support the collective bargaining legislation before you that would allow supervisors to engage in the same processes that protect the rights, working conditions, and safety guarantees that are afforded to everyone else. Fundamentally, this is a question of fairness, and one that can be resolved by making a simple change to the law. I urge you to support this legislation, not only for the good of supervisors around the state, but for the state of Maryland itself.

Jeremy Smith
Lieutenant
Eastern Correctional Institute, DPSCS