



**House Appropriations Committee
HB 609, Education - Public Libraries - Collective Bargaining
(Library Workers Empowerment Act)
February 9, 2024 – Favorable with Amendments**

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and Committee Members

I am writing in support of HB 609, the Library Workers Empowerment Act, with amendments. I heartily support the right of library employees to form unions, if they so desire. Overall, this bill will accomplish that objective. However, I am highly concerned with one section of the bill, section 23-907. (D) (3) on Page 8, line 33 through Page 9, line 5, pasted here for your reference:

33 **(3) IF THE EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION SUBMITS A SHOWING OF**
34 **INTEREST OF AT LEAST 50% OF THE EMPLOYEES IN AN UNREPRESENTED**
35 **BARGAINING UNIT:**

1 **(I) THE NEUTRAL DECISION MAKER SHALL ISSUE TO EACH**
2 **PARTICIPANT IN AN ELECTION A CERTIFICATION OF REPRESENTATION; AND**

3 **(II) THE EMPLOYER SHALL RECOGNIZE THE EMPLOYEE**
4 **ORGANIZATION AS THE CERTIFIED BARGAINING REPRESENTATIVE OF THE**
5 **EMPLOYEES AT ISSUE.**

This section precludes the ability of employees to participate in an election by secret ballot as detailed in section 23-907. (F) (1). It undermines the democratic process, and therefore I respectfully request an amendment to delete section 23-907. (D) (3).

Second, because the Governing Body of all library systems affected by this bill is the Board of Trustees, under the Education Article of the Maryland Code, (and not County Government), I request an amendment replacing the words "Governing Body" with "Funding Body" throughout the bill. I believe that will bring clarity to the legislation.

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I understand that the bill sponsor, Delegate Jared Solomon, is working with the Maryland Association of Public Library Administrators (MAPLA) to consider other amendments. As a member of MAPLA, I support those amendments as well.

Thank you very much for consideration of these requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Skip Auld". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Skip Auld, Chief Executive Officer, Anne Arundel County Public Library