



TESTIMONY FOR HB0609
Education – Public Libraries -Collective Bargaining (Library Workers Empowerment Act)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Solomon

Committee: Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0609 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

The rights of workers to organize and to bargain collectively with employers ensures that both workers and management come to the table as equals. Workers have organized in many different industries and have been able to ensure that they have good working conditions, health care, and reasonable wages.

It does cost employers more. There is absolutely no argument about that. Employers will always say that they can't afford to have workers organize because it eats into their profits, and often they prevail. Our members would respectfully ask you to look at this from the side of the workers. Is it right for an employer to pay sub-standard wages, or provide poor working conditions so that THEY can make more profit, at the expense of their workers? Any business that cannot pay a decent wage and provide decent working conditions does not deserve to be in business.

Public libraries, like other businesses should not be operating by taking advantage of workers. They should be enthusiastic in their support for good working conditions and good wages, and should welcome organizing and collective bargaining.

This bill will allow for collective bargaining for public library workers. The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.