



David Maher  
410-244-1010 (main)  
443-836-5699 (direct)  
maher@kscadvocates.com

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Testimony of David Maher  
SB 231 – State Government – Public Employee Relations Act – Alterations  
House Appropriations Committee  
**Favorable**

My firm represents AFT-Maryland, which represents teachers, professors, paraprofessionals and school related personnel, doctors, nurses and professional executive branch employees. My firm also represents firefighters, teachers, county and municipal employees, and other public employees.

SB 231 proposes several revisions to the Public Employee Relations Act, which governs collective bargaining and unionization for executive branch employees, public higher education employees, and public-school employees. AFT-Maryland supports SB 231 and the Public Employee Relations Board's development and fine-tuning of the Act.

SB 231 originally contained language which would have interfered with long-standing law about dues deduction for executive branch employees. This language would have interfered with existing law and Maryland's long history of respecting its employees' right to free association. The Senate amendments appropriately removed this provision.

AFT-Maryland opposes tying dues deduction rights to representational status and therefore supports the Senate amendments. AFT-Maryland supports this bill and urges passage in its current form.