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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SB373

**State Personnel – BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department – Collective
Bargaining and Arbitration Processes**

Good afternoon, Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang and Members of the Appropriations Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 373, State Personnel – BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department – Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes. This bill will clarify the bargaining process and formalize binding arbitration for the fire department at BWI. SB 373 is the cross-file of HB599 that this Committee passed, with amendments making it a constitutional amendment, and it passed the House. The bill does not require a constitutional amendment and this was confirmed by the Attorney General.

The fire fighters at BWI are the only fire fighters in the state of Maryland that are state employees. They are essential to the continued operation of BWI airport. They deserve to have the promise of binding arbitration if collective bargaining arrives at an impasse, like so many other fire fighters in our state and across the country.

This bill clarifies the bargaining process, the logistics, and the roles of the stakeholders, and provides security and a path forward for the ongoing relationship between the BWI fire fighters and the state. The goal of this legislation is to rule that once an agreement is in place whether achieved through collective bargaining or arbitration, it will be final and it will control.

I respectfully request a "Favorable Report" on SB 373.