

HB0604_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
03/06/2026
Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703-7134

TESTIMONY ON HB#0604 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026

TO: Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the Government, Labor and Elections Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#0604, **Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026**

This is a pro-worker bill that will add a neutral arbitrator to the collective bargaining processes between labor and the State agencies they work for. It will also require budgeting for appropriations to implement agreements that are negotiated and agreed to by the parties involved.

Maryland employees deserve to be treated fairly in negotiations knowing their issues will be fully considered and resolved by an open process. These employees should know once an agreement is reached its implementation will not be derailed due to financial problems. These employees can be assured that terms and conditions of employment will be put in place as negotiated.

The bill accomplishes these goals by altering the collective bargaining process for certain State employees, including by requiring the selection of a neutral arbitrator to oversee all aspects of collective bargaining, establishing a process of arbitration in the event of impasse, and providing that certain decisions of a neutral arbitrator are advisory; requiring that each budget bill contain the appropriations necessary to implement all terms and conditions of employment in certain memoranda of understanding for the next ensuing fiscal year; etc.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB0604.