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**House Bill 604 – Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026**  
**Government, Labor and Elections Committee**  
**March 6, 2026, 1:00pm**

**FAVORABLE**

On behalf of the Baltimore Teachers Union, representing the educators and school support professionals of Baltimore City Public Schools, we express our sincere support for the expansion of binding arbitration to state employees and higher education employees.

Binding arbitration has supported our union and district in reaching agreements and resolving conflicts. The Public Employee Relations Board's authority to declare impasse and oversee the arbitration process has created helpful oversight and a predictable procedural process for resolving conflict that strengthens bargaining. We have experienced better outcomes under this process and support the efforts of other public sector workers to gain access to this important legal framework.

Without binding arbitration, parties may lack clear timelines for negotiations and procedures that resolve conflict without giving either party an upper hand. Currently, after a fact-finding period, the state is able to impose the solutions they choose at their sole discretion. This situation weakens worker protections, and makes state government and higher education jobs harder to recruit for and retain workers in. Maryland's residents deserve the high quality public services that come about as a result of a workforce whose work is respected and whose rights are protected.

We respectfully request that the committee issue a favorable report on HB604.