



City Union of Baltimore

Local 800, AFT, AFL-CIO

**Written Testimony submitted on
February 4, 2020
By the City Union of Baltimore, AFT Local 800, AFL-CIO
Before the Maryland House Economic Matters Committee
HB 163 – Labor and Employment – Labor Organizations - Right to Work**

OPPOSE

Chair Davis and members of the House Economic Matters Committee. On behalf of the City Union of Baltimore, which represents over 3,000 workers employed by the city of Baltimore and the Baltimore City Public School System, I urge an unfavorable report to HB 163 – the so called “Right to Work” bill, a bill that is nothing less than an attack on America’s middle class.

This bill is nothing more than a thinly veiled attack on working Marylanders and their ability to come together in unity to best advocate for themselves and their colleagues through collective bargaining. It has nothing to do with advancing anyone’s “rights” at the workplace, and everything to do with lowering the bargaining power of millions of residents in favor of the wealthiest one percent. This bill looks at the ever-widening gap between the wealthy and the rest of the general public, and responds with “that gap should be even wider.”

States that have made the unfortunate mistake of enacting right-to-work laws consistently rank among the lowest states in the nation when it comes to worker pay, public health outcomes, per-pupil spending on education, and a host of other measures of the well-being of residents. I am disappointed the sponsors of this bill want to lower Maryland standards to that of these other right-to-work states.

Members of the committee: even though City Union of Baltimore is a public employee union and would not be directly impacted by the provisions in this bill, our members are most certainly invested in the health-and well-being of the residents we work to serve. We are, in our capacities as employees of Baltimore City, on the front-lines of the gap between the haves and the have-nots. We are proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our sisters and brothers in other labor unions throughout the state in opposition to HB 163.

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