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Chair Dereck Davis
231 House Office Building
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HB365: Debt Collection - Exemptions From Attachment and Execution
Testimony on Behalf of: MD|DC Credit Union Association
Position: Oppose

Chairman Davis, Vice-Chair Dumais and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the MD| DC Credit Union Association and the 84 Credit Unions and their 1.9 million members that we represent in the State of Maryland, we appreciate the opportunity to testify on this legislation. Credit Unions are member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperatives whose mission is to promote thrift and provide access to credit for provident and productive purposes for our members. We respectfully oppose this bill.

It is important to know, first and foremost, that credit unions very rarely pursue judgments to garnish wages. The credit union movement is best known for our customer service, willingness to help members in need, and our primary purpose of helping our members gain financial freedom. In the rare case that a credit union pursues wage garnishment to recoup funds, you can rest assured that all other avenues have been pursued first. Accordingly, if a credit union does pursue wage garnishment to recoup funds, a significant amount of time and costs have already been spent to try to remedy the situation. In other words, when we pursue wage garnishment, we really have no other options.

As member-owned, democratically controlled, financial cooperatives, the only funds that we can lend or use to create new products (other than grants and other sporadically timed programs) for our members are the funds that come from the members themselves. As democratically controlled institutions, when the decision is made to pursue garnishment, it is made by our members. If we cannot collect funds from those who fail to pay what they owe, it directly harms the other members. This is not fair to the other members, and for that reason, we oppose this bill which may make it more difficult for credit unions to garnish wages.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 443-325-0774 or jbratsakis@mddccua.org, or our VP of Advocacy, Rory Murray at rmurray@mddccua.org should you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Bratsakis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being more prominent than the last name "Bratsakis".

John Bratsakis
President/CEO
MD|DC Credit Union Association