

**Testimony of Jaimie Caldwell**  
**Librarian II, Baltimore County Public Library,**  
**Before the House Appropriations Committee**  
**January 27, 2021**

**H.R. 45 Education - Baltimore County Public Library - Collective Bargaining**

Thank you Madam Chair, Vice Chair Chang and members of the Committee. This is my first time testifying and it is an honor to have the ability to speak with you on the importance of having a union for the Baltimore County Public Library's (BCPL) staff.

My name is Jaimie Caldwell and I work at the Parkville branch. I work full-time as a Librarian II and have been with BCPL for nine years. I also live in District 43 and am proud to call Chairwoman McIntosh, my Delegate.

As a librarian, I spend a great deal of time programming on readers' advisories, statistics and outreach. I also host a book club at the Hickey School, and I coordinate collections and handle reference services.

I believe that with a union, we will have representation, collective bargaining and a more equitable workplace. We will have a voice and a vote on a contract. In addition, a union will ensure all of the employees will be treated in a fair and just manner.

For example, part-time employees work as hard as full-time employees. They should have the ability to participate in the pension plan that full-timers have, especially since the plan is based on employee contributions only.

Part-time employees should also be offered the benefits like full-timers. Benefits that include health care, dental and vision plans and life insurance. We are living in a pandemic and having health care is important. I realize you may argue that having medical insurance is an added cost for the state or county but having employees out sick or on FMLA will still cost the BCPL system dollars.

A union will also allow us to have labor law professionals represent us. We will no longer be alone and intimidated when we are forced to attend closed-door meetings. What is simply so attractive of a labor organization, is that all employees will have a say and a sway in the decision making process that affects our work on a daily basis. Having a contract will prevent administrators from making arbitrary decisions that vary from branch to branch.

Lastly, the hiring practices at BCPL are simply not reasonable nor fair. You will hear this repeatedly, but qualified employees should be given an opportunity to work for BCPL and they should reflect the racial makeup of our community. Educated and qualified applicants exist in our county, but they are simply not considered at the same level as other applicants.

As a committee, you listen to your constituents and you represent them all impartially and objectively. That is exactly what we are seeking. We would like to have collective bargaining for the BCPL staff so we can be heard with an open-mind and respected on the job.

I ask that you support collective bargaining for the Baltimore County Public Library staff and allow the workers to join a union if they so wish.

Thank you.