



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 251 – Maryland Funding Accountability and Transparency Act –
Nonbudgeted State Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
January 20, 2021**

SUPPORT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 251 – Maryland Funding Accountability and Transparency Act – Nonbudgeted State Agencies. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Since its creation in 2008, the Maryland Transparency Portal has been a useful tool for taxpayers to understand how their money is being allocated to fund State government. Unfortunately, the available data is not timely, and it is incomplete. Payment information is only updated on an annual basis, and not all State agencies are required to submit information regarding payments that have been made.

HB 251 helps rectify the issue of a lack of timely and complete data by requiring the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to update payment data on the Portal on a monthly – instead of an annual – basis and it requires nonbudgeted state agencies to submit their payment data for inclusion into the website. These changes will allow taxpayers to observe, on a monthly basis, payments greater than \$25,000 from all State agencies, and the entities that receive those payments.

Greater transparency in government is paramount to maintaining an educated citizenry that can make informed decisions about our priorities moving forward.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 251.