



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Office. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**HB 913 – Board of Community College Trustees for Baltimore County –
Collective Bargaining - Faculty
House Appropriations Committee
February 25, 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 HB 913 – Board of Community College Trustees for Baltimore County – Collective Bargaining - Faculty. 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.

The freedom to form and join a union is core to the U.N. Universal Declaration on Human Rights and is an “enabling” right—a fundamental right that ensures the ability to protect other rights.¹ HB 913 opens the door to faculty at the Community College of Baltimore County, allowing them to make their own decision as to whether they want to organize and form a union, or not. Fundamentally, this is enabling legislation. It does not mandate a union. It does not force any workers to join or oppose a union.

But we should go further. In a recent Executive Order, President Biden reaffirmed the position of the United States on collective bargaining rights by stating “*It is also the policy of the United States to encourage union organizing and collective bargaining.*”² We believe that the State of Maryland should follow the lead of the United States and do the same. HB 913 is an affirmation of our values to encourage and empower workers to have a voice in discussing with employers safety concerns, productivity, and pay and benefits and other working conditions.

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/22/executive-order-protecting-the-federal-workforce/>

The faculty at the Community College of Baltimore County deserve to exercise this right if they desire to do so. They may decide not to form a union, but with HB 913, they will, at the very least, have the option available to them in the future.

And for that reason, we ask for a favorable report on HB 913.