



**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 894
Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining (The Maryland
Community College Employees Freedom to Collectively Bargain Act of 2021)
Appropriations Committee**

Paulina Arnold, On Behalf of CASA

Honorable Chairman McIntosh and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

CASA is pleased to provide testimony in support of House Bill 894. CASA is the largest membership-based immigrant rights organization in Maryland and the Mid-Atlantic region, with a membership of over 100,000 Black and Brown immigrants and working families. Especially during a dangerous pandemic, community college employees deserve the necessary right to collectively bargain alongside other Maryland public workers.

As immigrant workers, CASA members are especially vulnerable to workplace exploitation. We understand the imbalance of power between employer and employee when workers have to advocate for their interests alone. The right to collectively bargain does not force a union on workers but allows them the freedom to choose union representation if they feel it would give them a more meaningful say in their working conditions, health, and safety.

Maryland guarantees the right to collectively bargain with over 200,000 public workers, from local workers to university staff. But community college employees have been unfairly excluded from this category, although they share many of their colleagues' concerns at state colleges and universities. HB 894 would put these employees back on equal footing with other public service workers. As we look towards recovery from the global pandemic, community college employees must have a seat at the table when decisions are being made about their classrooms, campuses, and health.

For all of these reasons, CASA supports HB 894 and urges a favorable report from the committee.

[Paulina Arnold](#)

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