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Patrick Moran - President

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**Testimony**  
**HB 124 – Occupational Safety and Health Standards to Protect Employees –**  
**Aerosol Transmissible Diseases and COVID-19**  
**Support**

AFSCME Council 3 supports HB 124. This emergency legislation requires the State to develop a temporary health and safety standard to protect employees from COVID-19 by March 1, 2021 and requires the establishment of an aerosol transmissible disease standard by October 1, 2021. We represent 30,000 state and higher education employees, many of whom have been reporting to work daily during this pandemic. Worksites continue to be one of the largest sources of exposure to the COVID-19 virus. To date, thousands of state employees have contracted COVID-19 and tragically nine AFSCME Council 3 members have died.

Nearing a year since the State of Emergency was first declared by Governor Hogan on March 12, 2020, it is past time for Maryland to adopt health and safety standards to protect workers from COVID-19 and future aerosol transmissible diseases. Many state and higher education employees still lack access to appropriate PPEs like n95 masks, gowns, and gloves. Health and safety protocols are still being inconsistently communicated, workplaces are rarely being disinfected on a regular schedule, and almost every worksite had to develop a plan to contain the spread of the virus from scratch.

Having these standards in place will not only help in keeping workers safe now, but they also ensure that we are better prepared for the next time. For all of these reasons, we urge a favorable report on HB 124.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.  
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.  
800.492.1996

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