



Official Testimony
SB 746 - Education - Community Colleges - Collective Bargaining
Position: **FAVORABLE**

Chair Kelley and Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Ricarra Jones and I am the Political Director of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East. We are the largest healthcare workers union in the nation – representing 10,000 healthcare workers in Long-Term Care facilities and hospitals across Maryland. Our union supports SB746: Community Colleges Collective Bargaining and urge the Committee to issue a **favorable** report.

This legislation will establish collective bargaining rights for certain employees at community colleges. As a labor union, we believe all workers should have the right to organize, unionize, and bargain with employers for better working conditions. One of 1199's many victories throughout our history was in 1962 when we successfully pushed Governor Rockefeller in New York to sign a collective bargaining law allowing hospital workers to unionize for the first time. We stand in solidarity with our sister union SEIU Local 500 in their fight for collective bargaining because our members know firsthand how the right to form a union had a positive impact on their lives, and we want that positive impact to be extended to community college employees.

Over 100,000 public school employees in K-12 schools have the right to collective bargaining, in addition to 60,000 state workers and 4,000 faculty and staff at four community colleges already. This bill will make sure more educators and school staff have the same rights other educators have already won. When our educators are taken care of, students receive a better education, and that benefits every Marylander. Please vote **YES** on SB746: Community Colleges -- Collective Bargaining.

Sincerely,

Ricarra Jones
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