



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**SB 717 – State Personnel – Collective Bargaining –  
Exclusive Representative Access to New Employees  
Senate Finance Committee  
March 4, 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 SB 717 – State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Exclusive Representative Access to New Employees. My name is Donna S. Edwards, President of the Maryland State and DC, AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

For any organization to be effective, it needs access to the people it represents. This is true of businesses, advocacy groups, and even informal social clubs. Unions, advocating on behalf of workers, should be no different. Without adequate and timely access to newly hired workers, an Exclusive Representative cannot serve them properly or educate them on their rights in the workplace. Additionally, our unions provide invaluable information on professional development opportunities to workers, as well as helping them attain certification to effectively do their jobs. Creating a more knowledgeable and effective workforce, that can best serve the needs of Maryland's residents is one of the highest priorities of our Public Sector Unions

Access to the people that they must represent, by law, gives the Exclusive Representative a pathway to better protect all workers – be they members of the union, or not – provide critical information and assistance to workers. SB 717 clarifies existing law to allow the exclusive bargaining representative timely access to state workers after they are hired. This early meeting is crucial in making sure that newly hire workers have the knowledge necessary to be successful in their job and to provide the highest level of service to the residents or our State.

**For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB 717.**