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Patrick Moran - President

**Testimony**  
**SB 717 – State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Exclusive Representative Access to**  
**New Employees**  
**Finance**  
**March 4, 2021**  
**Support**

AFSCME Council 3 strongly supports SB 717. This legislation would address needed changes within existing law enabling fair access to newly hired employees of the State by the exclusive bargaining unit representative.

Chapter 24 of the Laws of 2018 codified a process for exclusive bargaining unit representatives to be able to engage recently hires during new employee orientations. With the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, however, holes in the law as written have been exposed in a way to undermine the intent:

- When held, new employee orientations are now often done virtually, lessening the ability to personally engage
- Some employers choose to stay online while the bargaining unit representative is presenting, chilling the ability of workers to engage
- Technical difficulties can eat into the time allotted for presentation
- Some employers wait months before holding a “new” employee orientation
- For a variety of reasons, a new employee may not be able to attend a scheduled orientation.

This legislation will address those issues by requiring a meeting between the employee and the exclusive bargaining representative within the first pay period of the new employee; requiring the meeting be in-person unless public health circumstances necessitate otherwise; extending the minimum time for presentation by the exclusive bargaining representative to 30 minutes; and ensuring ample notice is given to the exclusive bargaining representative of the hire, along with all appropriate and applicable employee identification numbers, including “Workday” numbers.

We thank you and urge a favorable report.

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.  
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