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*County Executive*

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**BILL NO.:**            **SB 717**

**TITLE:**                State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Exclusive  
                             Representative Access to New Employees

**SPONSOR:**            Senator Zucker

**COMMITTEE:**        Finance

**POSITION:**          **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**                March 4, 2021

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 717 – State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Exclusive Representative Access to New Employees. This legislation would enhance access to new employees for an exclusive representative from the employee’s union and alter the method by which the employee and representative may meet.

It is crucial that, at the start of their employment, employees obtain access to their union representative to understand their rights and responsibilities as a unionized employee. While there is currently a procedure in place to hold this meeting, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced workers and union representatives across the State into their homes, hindering the process. This legislation amends those procedures to accommodate necessary measures during a health emergency by allowing for virtual meetings. Additionally, SB 717 increases the time allotted for an employee and exclusive representative to meet.

County Executive Olszewski is a staunch supporter of collective bargaining rights, and understands that allowing employees to join a union will empower them to speak with one voice. Employees deserve to have a say in the way their organizations function, and the community will benefit from their input.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on Sb 717. For more information, please contact Chuck Conner, Director of Government Affairs, at [cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:cconner@baltimorecountymd.gov).