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**HB 54 – Higher Education – St. Mary’s College of Maryland – Cost-of-Living Adjustment
House Appropriations Committee
February 1, 2022**

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 HB 54 – Higher Education – St. Mary’s College of Maryland – Cost-of-Living Adjustment. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland’s 340,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Workers for the University System of Maryland and Morgan State University currently enjoy 100% of the Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) that other state employees receive. Workers at St. Mary’s College, however, only receive 50% of the state employee COLA. Inexplicably, these state employees are on a second tier, while their counterparts in other areas of the state, doing the same exact work, are receiving a full COLA.

HB 54 corrects this by changing the funding formula for St. Mary’s College to provide 100% funding for any cost-of-living increases provided to state workers. This bill will bring workers at St. Mary’s College back in line with other state workers at Maryland’s higher education institutions. This bill is about fundamental fairness, and it shows that the General Assembly recognizes and honors the work done at all our universities.

For these reasons we ask for a favorable report on HB 54.