ST MARY'S
COLLEGE *of* MARYLAND
The National Public Honors College

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House Bill 458
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Revisions and Budget Bill Appropriations
House Appropriations Committee
February 15, 2022

Request for Exemption

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee,

St. Mary's College of Maryland opposes House Bill 458, which requires the use of a third-party, neutral arbitrator to serve as proctor during Memorandum of Understanding negotiations between the College and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL–CIO (AFSCME).

This requirement would create a significant financial burden, as negotiations typically last several months. We estimate that the cost of hiring a third-party, neutral, arbitrator to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding would cost approximately $50K, plus an additional $40K per year for negotiations related to various reopeners, amendments, or other matters that may arise. These estimates include their daily rate and travel expenses.

Negotiation impasses are currently adjudicated by the State Higher Education Labor Relations Board (SHELRB). House Bill 458 is unclear regarding the role of the arbitrator and their authority to circumvent the SHELRB. We believe that in the case of an impasse, the SHELRB process provides the same service that the Bill requires, but utilizes a panel of arbitrators, rather than just a single arbitrator. The process currently utilized with SHELRB has been very effective.

The College and AFSCME have negotiated many Memoranda of Understanding successfully. Both parties are committed to the best interest of the College's staff, which is evident through their collaboration and teamwork. The College does not find it necessary to add a third-party arbitrator to the process.

For these reasons, St. Mary's College of Maryland requests exemption from House Bill 458.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Tuajuanda C. Jordan, Ph.D.
President

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