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Patrick Moran - President

Testimony
HB 964 – State Operating Budget – Step Increases for State Employees –
Reporting
Appropriations
March 10, 2022
Support

AFSCME Council 3 strongly supports HB 964. If the Governor does not provide ample budgeted allocation to pay for step increases for State employees, this simple piece of legislation would require the Governor to report to the General Assembly on the date on which the annual budget bill is submitted the reasons why an appropriation sufficient to provide certain step increases for State employees was not included in the annual budget bill.

Under the Maryland State Personnel & Pensions Code § 8-106 it calls for “regulations adopted under this subtitle shall provide for automatic increases, from minimum to maximum steps in a pay grade, of the pay rates set by the Standard Pay Plan for an employee whose overall performance is rated satisfactory or above on the employee’s annual performance appraisal.”

Former Senator Mac Middleton passed legislation mandating steps – sometimes known as longevity pay – in part to recognize the value in long-term employment of the state workforce, but also as a way to entice people to join state service. Human resources managers consider this type of raise as a way to recognize loyalty and to inspire new or potential employees to see that the company values experience and loyalty. THESE ARE NOT COST-OF-LIVING-ADJUSTMENTS.

How many steps has the Hogan Administration funded during his tenure as a demonstration of his valuing state workers’ service and an acknowledgment of the dedication and commitment individuals have to serving Marylanders? 3. 3 steps have been funded for state employees.

While AFSCME would love to determine how mandatory steps could be funded in full annually, at the very least a Governor should have to justify to the General Assembly why they are choosing to NOT fully fund steps for the women and men who keep Maryland moving forward. You deserve to know, and so does the State workforce that have dedicated themselves to public service.

I ask for favorable consideration of HB 964. Thank you.

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An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
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