



February 16, 2022

**Senate Bill 472**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Revisions and Budget Bill  
Appropriations**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** SB 472. This legislation and proposed amendment to the Maryland Constitution would alter the collective bargaining process for State and Higher Education employees, including by requiring the selection of a neutral arbitrator to oversee all aspects of collective bargaining; establishing a process of arbitration in the event of impasse; and providing that the decisions of a neutral arbitrator are binding. It would also require that each budget bill submitted by the Governor contain the appropriations necessary to implement all terms and conditions of employment in collectively bargained memoranda of understanding for the next ensuing fiscal year.

Collective bargaining only works as well as the participants in the process. To work toward a final resolution requires the ability not only to present one side's proposals in a compelling and meaningful way, but just as importantly to listen and seriously consider the other side's proposals in order to reach an understanding of the perspective and standing of both parties. When both sides engage with this frame of reference, mutual understanding and common ground can be found, and a satisfactory resolution achieved for all involved.

But there are times where situations seemingly dictate an inability to find compromise and resolution. Frankly this usually occurs when one side cannot or will not work to reach that satisfactory resolution – they would rather dig in and refuse to budge.

Binding arbitration through the process of a neutral mediator/arbitrator can overcome those obstacles to resolution. In Anne Arundel County we have a binding arbitration process which can be employed when contract negotiations occur between the county and the Uniformed Public Safety Exclusive Representatives. Binding arbitration creates an added incentive – to both sides – to reach that common ground and understanding toward a resolution. It also ensures that one side cannot game the system to their advantage. It is a referee ensuring fairness, balance and fact are the rules enforced.

Anne Arundel County supports SB 472, and we request a **FAVORABLE** report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steuart Pittman".

Steuart Pittman  
County Executive