



We are Maryland residents, allies inside the Office of the Public Defender (OPD), and members of supporting organizations across the state who are grateful for OPD's many contributions to their clients and our communities. We are proud of OPD's frontline staff and their work serving the people of Maryland in seeking fair treatment, liberty, and access to justice for all.

In unprecedented times they have worked to ensure Maryland's public defense was effective and everyone received representation. They never faltered in their determination to fulfill the agency's mission for "justice, fairness and dignity for all." We now call on you to ensure those values are extended to the staff at OPD as well.

The strain of a global pandemic, high turnover, unmanageable workloads and the lack of policy consistency across districts has put a considerable burden on the staff and on the services they provide. **It's time OPD staff are included in the 30,000 other state employees who have a voice in the policies, procedures and pay that affect their work lives.**

There is no reason core staff, attorneys and social workers at OPD should be left behind and denied their basic civil right to negotiate their wages and working conditions. In supporting collective bargaining rights and merit status for OPD employees, we are supporting their clients. Every person deserves the highest quality of representation under the law, and in order to achieve that, OPD staff need to have adequate resources and a voice in raising standards in their agency.

By signing this petition, we are calling on Maryland Delegates and Senators to **pass HB 90/SB 255 expanding collective bargaining rights and merit status for OPD employees.**

We the undersigned...



**JEWES UNITED
FOR JUSTICE**

THINK JEWISHLY. ACT LOCALLY.

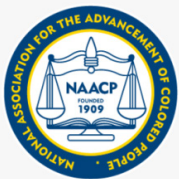


**ACL
Union**

**CASA
DE MARYLAND™**

BALT
BALTIMORE ACTION LEGAL TEAM

**PUBLIC
JUSTICE
CENTER**



NAACP
Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

**Center
FOR URBAN
FAMILIES**
HELPING FATHERS AND FAMILIES WORK



MONTGOMERY
COUNTY, MARYLAND

WOMEN'S
DEMOCRATIC CLUB

**JUSTICE
POLICY
INSTITUTE**

AFSCME MARYLAND LOCALS:



Local 239 - Frostburg State University

Local 354 - Washington & Frederick Counties Employees

Local 539 - Carroll & Howard County Employees

Local 557 - Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center

Local 631 - Suburban Washington Employees

Local 1081 - Lower Eastern Shore Employees

Local 1459 - University of MD Baltimore County

Local 1535 - Maryland State Employees, Baltimore City

Local 1606 - MDTA-Baltimore Area

Local 1803 - MD Employees in Anne Arundel County

Local 1870 - Baltimore City Community College

Local 3167 - Department of Juvenile Services

Local 3478 - Eastern Correctional Institution

Local 3644 - Dept of Education, IWIF & Worker's Comp Employees

Local 3661 - Parole & Probation Employees

...support this letter.

**WE STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE
MARYLAND DEFENDERS UNION.**

