



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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## **HB 984 - Public Employees Relations Act House Appropriations Committee March 7, 2023**

### **SUPPORT**

**Donna S. Edwards  
President**

**Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 984. 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 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

HB 984 consolidates the state's three different labor boards into a single entity known as the Public Employee Relations Board. The state's labor boards are under-resourced and do not have the support they need to process disputes like grievances, unit clarifications, bargaining issues, or charges of unfair labor practices in an effective manner. Maryland's state workers are currently assigned to either the State Labor Relations Board, the State Higher Education Labor Relations Board, or the Public Schools Labor Relations Board. Between all three of these labor boards the state only employs two full-time staff. For a collective bargaining system that covers tens of thousands of workers, this is not enough. The combined budgets of these three boards is less than 10% of what Ohio spends on administering their state employee collective bargaining system.

Maryland's public sector employees deserve better than the current fragmented and untimely system. HB 984 follows the precedent established by Pennsylvania, Washington, Michigan, California, Ohio, New York, and New Jersey that all have a single state public sector labor relations board.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report to HB 984.