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SB428 Washington County - Deputy Sheriffs and Correctional Deputies –  
Employment Conditions and Collective Bargaining  
Appropriations Committee  
March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
Support

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) representing public employees in Maryland on the state, county, and municipal level, supports SB 428 Washington County – Deputy Sheriff and Correctional Deputies – Employment Conditions and Collective Bargaining.

The right of collective bargaining makes sense in America, especially in the State of Maryland. Where collective bargaining exists, employees and employers are provided with the opportunity to join together in tackling work related issues. Our members know the value public employees bring to the community and to those they serve. We have seen, first-hand, that collective bargaining not only gives employees a voice on the job, but also helps foster positive changes amongst all parties.

As the elected union for most bargaining units of State and Local/Municipal Government Employees, AFSCME negotiates for wages, benefits, and working conditions on behalf of employees. Most importantly, we work with the employee’s state and local government agencies to create things such as labor-management committees in order to work collaboratively to find resolutions on the many issues impacting government operations. For example, short staffing in state government or cost savings work projects in cities and counties.

This bill authorizes full-time sworn deputy sheriffs and correctional deputies in the Washington County Sheriff’s Office, at or below the rank of sergeant, to engage in collective bargaining with the Washington County Sheriff and the Washington County Administrator. Any additional funding required as a result of a collective bargaining agreement is subject to approval by the County Commissioners. The bill’s provisions may not be construed to authorize or otherwise allow sworn deputy sheriffs or correctional deputies to engage in a strike, as specified. The bill also alters the statutory provisions that specify the grounds on which a deputy sheriff of a specified rank may be discharged.

SB 428 is not only a good bill but a fair bill, which seeks to give these workers the right to collectively join their voices at the workplace. We urge you to support this bill. Workers have the right to have their voices heard. Let’s give them the opportunity to do so.

We urge a favorable report on SB428.

**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

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