

Written Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House Appropriations Committee HB 183
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining – Supervisory and Managerial Employees
January 31, 2023 SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chair Barnes and members of the House Appropriations Committee. My name is Oattie Deavers and I am Regional Manager with the Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) for the Vehicle Recovery Unit (VRU) in Rockville Maryland, I have been with the MdTA 28+ years and have served in a supervisory role for approximately 16 years.

I am a member of Maryland Supervisors for Collective Bargaining Rights and the Maryland Classified Employees Association, AFT local 1935.

As a state supervisor, currently excluded from the state's collective bargaining law for Maryland employees, I am here today to advocate for HB 183, and ask this committee for a favorable report.

I manage the day to day operations of the VRU at the Inter County Connector (MD-200), this includes but is not limited to, scheduling, record keeping, performance evaluations, daily performance tracking, payroll, just to name a few for the employees assigned to this unit, maintaining fleet vehicles and associated records assigned to the VRU, all internal towing, all clerical duties, keeping track of all tools, equipment & vehicles to include inventory records, ordering supplies etc. and most importantly risking my life patrolling the highway for stranded motorist, accidents, and any other incidents that disrupt the flow of traffic, coordinating with police, fire and rescue, and any other agencies during emergencies and making sure the subordinates in my charge are safe as well as the Maryland residents and all others that use our roadway **are** safe.

I want collective bargaining because over the years the cost of living has drastically increased but the paycheck being directed deposited to my account has not kept up with those increases, not to mention the increasing responsibilities that continue to come. There have been several instances where non-supervisory employees have received bonuses and pay increases and we as supervisors have been left behind. During the Covid-19 pandemic while most other employees were sent home on administrative leave the employees of the MdTA VRU were required to risk our lives and those of our loved ones and work every single day performing the exact same duties, during that time other employees that had to be at work for various reasons were paid additional pay and we were left behind. Here at the MdTA in the unit I work in there is a great pay discrepancy where a new employee can walk in the door and make the same amount or more money than current supervisors. There is also a discrepancy between the MdTA VRU Regional managers and the State Highway Administration CHART Regional Managers. Over the years with pay issues we've been told by MdTA executive management that there's nothing they can do to rectify these pay discrepancies.

To conclude, when state collective bargaining law was introduced and passed over 20 years

ago, we as supervisors were erroneously excluded, even though we are state workers and do not hire, fire, promote, or adjust grievances for any state employee. We again call this committee to issue a favorable report for HB 183. Thank you.