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**Written Testimony to the Senate Education, Energy & Environment Committee
SB 791 - Primary and Secondary Education - Public School Employees –
Job Duties and Salaries
March 3, 2023**

SUPPORT

Chair Feldman and members of the committee, on behalf of the American Federation of Teachers - Maryland (AFT-MD), which represents more than 20,000 members including the Baltimore Teachers' Union (BTU), we urge you to support SB 791.

This bill would expand state salary increases available to National Board Certified (NBC) teachers, to qualified educators currently not eligible. These would include reading and math specialists, school counselors, literacy interventionists, gifted and talented specialists, and others who are important to the academic success students. A level playing field is important to ensure highly qualified educators in these positions stay in them rather than move to NBC-eligible positions.

Other positions such as school psychologists and speech pathologists, in some cases are not eligible for NBC but have the ability to gain national certification from other accreditation bodies. The Maryland State Board of Education and the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board would vet and determine what the appropriate and applicable accreditations are in each job type. These positions face shrinking pipelines to fill them, which shows the importance of simple changes like this bill proposes.

This bill would remove unworkable career ladder requirement that assistant principals spend 20% of their time engaged in teaching activities. Assistant principals are needed to address student discipline, serve as observers in the evaluation system, and support strong professional growth systems. Adding teaching duties to already overworked assistant principals prevents them from carrying out key functions of their job.

Finally, the bill would remove the statute that permits only distinguished and professor distinguished teachers to write curriculum and to develop model lessons. There are few educators at that level which makes this provision unworkable. For these reasons, we again ask for a favorable report on SB 791. Thank you.

