



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 613 - Baltimore City – Assault of Special Enforcement Officers – Penalties
House Judiciary Committee
February 28, 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 613. 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.

Assault on our public employees is an assault on all of us. With several high profile attacks on public workers in transportation, social services, hospitals and other sites in Maryland in recent months, it is imperative that we act sooner, rather than later, on imposing stiffer penalties against those who would bring harm to our special enforcement officers, special parking enforcement officers, and special traffic enforcement officers.

Current law recognizes that fact by imposing felony penalties for a physical assault if the victim is a police officer, firefighter, first responder, or parole officer, that is engaged in the performance of their public duties. Unfortunately, the workers mentioned in this bill are not currently covered under that umbrella of greater protection if they happen to be assaulted on the job.

Maryland's parking enforcement officers and traffic enforcement officers interact with the public on a daily basis, and are, oftentimes, the subject of assault. These workers are the public face of our transportation system, making sure that rules that benefit all of us are followed. They deserve the same respect and protection afforded to other public employees who are at risk of being assaulted on the job.

It is time for us to bring these public servants up to parity with police, firefighters, first-responders, and parole officers, by imposing felony penalties for those who assault them.