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**Written Testimony Submitted to the Maryland House Appropriations Committee
HB 559 - State Employees - Four-Day Workweek – Implementation
February 27, 2024**

FAVORABLE

Chair Barnes and members of the Committee, AFT-MD asks for a favorable report on HB 559, which proposes the implementation of a 4-day workweek for state employees in designated units or functions of state government. This forward-thinking legislation offers numerous benefits to both state employees and the efficiency of state operations.

The provision outlined in the bill underscores a commitment to exploring innovative approaches to workplace flexibility while maintaining the productivity and effectiveness of state government operations. By identifying units or functions where a 4-day workweek is feasible and beneficial for at least 60% of state employees, this legislation aims to enhance employee satisfaction, work-life balance, and overall morale.

Furthermore, the bill demonstrates a thoughtful approach to implementation. By setting clear deadlines for the identification and implementation of the 4-day workweek, as well as outlining requirements for negotiation with exclusive representatives of bargaining units, the legislation ensures a smooth transition process for affected employees.

Importantly, House Bill 559 safeguards the rights and interests of state employees throughout the transition to a 4-day workweek. Employees who opt to transition are protected from reductions in work hours, pay, or benefits, providing reassurance and stability during this period of change.

The bill also mandates a comprehensive reporting requirement to the General Assembly, ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation process. This reporting will allow for an assessment of the impact of the 4-day workweek on vacancy rates, budgets, and other relevant factors, enabling informed decision-making moving forward.

HB 559 represents a proactive step towards modernizing state government operations and promoting employee well-being. We urge the Committee to support this legislation, as it holds the potential to improve employee satisfaction, increase productivity, and enhance the overall effectiveness of state government. Thank you.

