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**SB 298 - State Board of Electricians - Licensing - Penalties
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
January 23, 2024**

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

**Donna S. Edwards
President
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 298 - State Board of Electricians - Licensing - Penalties with amendments. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 300,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

SB 298 allows the Maryland State Board of Electricians to issue penalties up to \$5,000 for violations of the electrical licensing rules. The state's license rules are in place to protect workers and the public from bad business practices and safety issues, including failing to adequately train apprentices, failing to carry insurance, or failing to perform work according to a contract. By permitting financial penalties up to \$5,000, it provides the State Board of Electricians with another tool in the toolbox to protect electrical workers and consumers.

We believe that this bill would be strengthened with the following amendment:

Adding after 6-316 and before (a)(1), to read:

“STATEWIDE ANY PERSON WHO VIOLATES ANY OF THE REGULATIONS OF SECTION 6-316 SHALL BE PENALIZED. WHEN AND IF A LOCAL AUTHORIZED ELECTRICAL ADMINISTRATION CAN NOT RESOLVE THE INFRACTION(S) THEN THAT PERSON SHALL BE:”

This amendment prevents overburdening the State Board of Electricians by permitting the local boards to resolve issues first when they arise. The State Board of Electricians already has a backlog of hearings. The amendment would streamline the Board's work and foster increased collaboration between state and local boards.

We urge a favorable report on SB 298 with the proposed amendments.