

Written Testimony Submitted for the House Appropriations Committee
Testimony of Jill Rodenburg
SB 591 –The Library Workers Empowerment Act
February 29th, 2024

SUPPORT

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Jill Rodenburg, and I am a Library Associate II at the Mountain Road branch of the Anne Arundel County Public Libraries. I have been full time for the last ten years, and though I have worked twelve total, my full time years are the only ones that are counted. Preparing for retirement has proven difficult, both as the cost of living has soared and as my salary has been unable to keep up.

Speaking from a smaller branch perspective, we have many of the same programming requirements as a larger branch but have to do it with a smaller staff. That means overworked employees and leaves less time for training, Continuing Education Units, and other job tasks. At our smaller branches, many jobs need to be done by staff with lower job titles. This sort of misclassification means there is a lack of clarity, but also a lack of fairness when it comes to how our jobs are treated.

I was the Staff Association Chair during the pandemic. We tried to address many issues and sometimes were successful, but often we had to fight hard to get management to listen. We told them there is a communication gap between employees and management. It's hard to build trust in a situation like that. Instead, good faith collective bargaining would give us the power to approach each other honestly and fairly. This is what SB 591 can accomplish, what you all can accomplish, if you pass this bill. Thank you for your time.

Jill Rodenburg
Library Associate II
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