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**HB 921 – State Employees – Colleague Bereavement Leave**  
**Appropriations Committee**  
**March 4, 2025**

**FAVORABLE**

AFSCME Council 3 supports House Bill 921 and thanks Delegate Lewis for sponsoring this legislation. House Bill 921 affords public employees the dignity to mourn the loss of a co-worker or colleague away from work, without the loss of pay. The legislation would provide an employee up to five days of paid bereavement leave immediately following the death of a colleague who is employed by the same agency as the employee seeking leave, provided that the colleague's death occurs on the job and the employee seeking leave worked in close proximity to the colleague who died.

AFSCME Council 3 represents approximately 50,000 public service workers at the state, county, and municipal levels of government. AFSCME members are on the frontlines everyday across Maryland providing critical public services that make our communities run.

As members of this committee are aware of, in 2024, our union lost three of our brothers due to tragedies that occurred on the job. Agent Davis Martinez, Mr. Ronald Silver II, and Mr. Timothy Cartwell each lost their lives due to events that took place in their work. Families, friends, and colleagues are left behind to remember them and the extraordinary impact they had on the lives of their loved ones.

In the specific case of Agent Martinez's death, his co-workers were left devastated by his tragic murder, and yet, had to come to work the next day to perform their jobs as if it was any other ordinary day at work. The unimaginable loss of a beloved colleague, particularly in such a horrific manner, should afford workers the opportunity to grieve the loss of a cared-for colleague with dignity and in a manner that allows them even a short amount of time to process such a loss.

House Bill 921, if enacted, will provide workers with the opportunity to mourn the loss of a beloved colleague with dignity and in a manner that is befitting of their contributions to the public service.

**We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 921.**