

**House Bill 176 – Labor and Employment – Occupational Safety and Health –
Revisions (Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act)
Appropriations Committee
February 18, 2025**

FAVORABLE

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Delonya Akindoyo, and I have proudly served as a custodian and union member for Anne Arundel County Public Schools for nearly 20 years. I currently serve as the President of AFSCME Local 1693, representing food service, transportation, operations, and maintenance employees. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 176, the Davis Martinez Public Employee Safety and Health Act, and urge you to support this legislation.

Our employees face numerous workplace safety challenges that threaten their ability to perform their jobs safely and effectively. For example, at one of our training locations for the transportation department, trainers are tasked with certifying new drivers for county subcontractor buses. During a recent training session, a participant fell asleep. When trainers explained that sleeping during training was unacceptable and warned her that she would be asked to leave if it continued, the individual became aggressive. She verbally threatened the trainers, used racial slurs, and caused such disruption that the trainers had to call for assistance. The police ultimately had to remove her from the premises to ensure safety.

Similarly, other departments have experienced unsafe incidents. In one case, two maintenance workers had a disagreement at a worksite that escalated into a physical altercation, endangering those around them. Bus drivers have also faced significant risks, such as when a student became confrontational toward a bus aide, eventually hitting the aide and causing a bloody nose. Custodial workers are not exempt from these dangers. In one instance, a custodian asked a student to leave a bathroom so it could be cleaned. The student responded with racial slurs and threats, leaving the older custodian feeling unsafe and disrespected.

These incidents represent just a few examples of the unsafe and hostile conditions our employees endure. House Bill 176 is critical to addressing these recurring safety concerns. It will provide the necessary protections, training, and resources to create a safer work environment for public employees. Passing this legislation would not only ensure the well-being of our workforce but also allow them to serve the community more effectively and confidently.

I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 176.

Sincerely,
Delonya Akindoyo
President, AFSCME Local 1693
Anne Arundel County Public Schools