

CORY V. MCCRAY  
Legislative District 45  
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Chair, Health and Human Services

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

## Vote Yes on SB 288

**Bill Title:** Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2025

**Committee:** Budget and Taxation Committee

**Hearing Date:** January 22, 2025

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

My name is Cory McCray for the record. I would like to request your support for SB 288, which proposes a constitutional amendment to improve the collective bargaining process for state employees in Maryland.

SB 288 takes important steps to ensure fairness and efficiency in labor negotiations for state personnel unions by:

- Requiring the Governor to include an appropriation in the budget bill to fund all terms of the collective bargaining agreement.
- Introducing a neutral third-party arbitrator when negotiations reach an impasse.
- Establishing a framework for binding arbitration, contingent upon voter approval of the constitutional amendment at the next General Election.

Importantly, this bill preserves the General Assembly's budgeting authority, as we can still amend the Governor's budget after it is introduced.

### **Why SB 288 Is Necessary:**

The current negotiation process for state employees, including those at our public four-year higher education institutions, is fundamentally broken. Without a meaningful procedure to address impasses, negotiations can drag on indefinitely, leaving critical issues unresolved.

Binding arbitration creates a balanced playing field for both parties, encouraging good-faith negotiations and fostering timely agreements. In jurisdictions where binding arbitration is in place, parties are more likely to reach agreements without even needing arbitration, making the process both fairer and more efficient.

**Maryland Lags Behind:**

- 26 states and the District of Columbia already provide some or all state employees the right to binding arbitration.
- Several Maryland jurisdictions, including eight counties and the Town of Ocean City, grant this right to some or all employees.
- Public K-12 employees statewide and Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) employees within state government already have access to binding arbitration.

This legislation ensures that state employees receive the same level of respect and fairness afforded to other workers, aligning Maryland with best practices nationwide.

The General Assembly has a long-standing commitment to supporting workers' rights to collectively bargain. SB 288 continues this legacy by strengthening the process and ensuring efficient negotiations that lead to fair contracts.

I request a favorable Vote on SB 288. Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to answer any questions.

Continued Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cory V. McCray  
45<sup>th</sup> District