

Binding Arb Testimony .pdf

Uploaded by: Christian Rejonis

Position: FAV



Christian A. Rejonis
President

Michael L. Miller Jr.
Vice President

Sherreka R. Jackson
Secretary

Christopher P. Ryder
Treasurer

BWI AIRPORT PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS

AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE FIGHTERS AFL-CIO-CLC
LOCAL 1742 – CHARTERED DECEMBER 7, 1967

February 4, 2025

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes and Honorable Members of the Finance Committee,

I am writing today to urge you to provide a favorable report in support of SB-373. My name is Christian Rejonis and have the privilege of being the union President for The BWI Airport Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 1742. Our union represents a highly trained and skilled group of individuals that play an intracule roll in the safety of the community around BWI airport, the employees who work at BWI airport and the more than 27 million passengers BWI Airport sees every year. We respond to calls in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County and Howard County. All these jurisdictions have binding arbitration.

Binding arbitration is a widely recognized practice that has been extremely helpful in ensuring fair collective bargaining with many career Fire Department's across the nation including in our great state. Along with many Fire Department's here in Maryland, the Maryland Transit Administration and the Labor union SLEOLA representing many of Maryland's state police agencies already have binding arbitration previsions. Also county employees in multiple jurisdictions across Maryland have binding arbitration. It is common for Fire Department and Police Departments to have binding reason for one major reason. That reason is simply because we are unable to strike. No firefighter wants to strike, we all have a passion for our job however having binding arbitration would certainly help level the playing fields when we're sitting at the negotiating table.

Putting a deadline on the collective bargaining process forces both the union and management to make negotiating a fair and equitable contract a priority. To often, the union and the state is left working late in the month of December trying to get negotiations concluded. Despite the unions attempts to get negotiations concluded, we were forced to hold a meeting on December 30th last year to attempt to get our contract wrapped up. Due to the last second rush over an already busy time of year, it is often difficult to ensure that everything is truly included that should be.

I respectfully urge the committee to grant a favorable report on SB-373.

Respectfully,
Christian A. Rejonis

SB 373 - State Personnel - BWI Airport Fire and Re

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

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President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**SB 373 - State Personnel - BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department - Collective
Bargaining and Arbitration Process
Senate Finance Committee
February 6, 2025**

SUPPORT

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

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 373. 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 373 ensures a fair and effective collective bargaining and arbitration process for uniformed fire employees for the BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department.

These workers put their lives on the line to respond to emergencies to protect travelers and airport personnel. Given the nature of their work, they deserve a fair and equitable process to negotiate wages, hours, and working conditions.

This legislation recognizes the crucial work these fire employees do by investing in labor fairness and their well-being.

For these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable vote on SB 373.

Senate Bill 373 (2025) PFFMD Testimony - J. Buddle

Uploaded by: Jeffrey Buddle

Position: FAV



February 6, 2025

Senator Pamela Beidle, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Position: FAVORABLE

**SB373 – State Personnel – BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department
Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes**

The Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland represents more than 10,000 active and retired professional fire fighters and emergency medical services personnel who proudly serve the citizens of the State of Maryland.

Senate Bill 373 would provide for collective bargaining with binding arbitration between uniformed fire fighters of the BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department and the State of Maryland. Collective bargaining is an essential tool for ensuring that fire fighters have a seat at the table particularly when it comes to wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Binding arbitration reduces the uncertainty that fire fighters face when negotiations break down. Knowing that an impartial third party will make a final decision fosters trust in the bargaining process, empowering fire fighter representatives at the bargaining table to participate more fully and advocate for their member's needs.

Equally important, binding arbitration also provides a fair, impartial, and legally sound mechanism to resolve differences when collective bargaining does not produce a mutually agreed upon outcome.

The State of Maryland also stands to gain a benefit from binding arbitration. The process prevents the unnecessary escalation of disputes, which could otherwise lead to workplace uncertainty, decreased employee morale or employer reputational damage.

On behalf of the members of Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland I urge you to support SB373, an important piece of legislation, which will foster a more balanced, just, and productive environment for our fire fighters at BWI Airport.

Submitted respectfully,



Jeffrey Buddle, President
Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland

The membership of the Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland includes 25 IAFF local affiliates from the following jurisdictions:

Federal: Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Fort George G. Meade, National Capital Federal Fire Fighters

State: Baltimore / Washington International Airport

Local: Annapolis City, Allegany County, Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City (2 affiliates), Baltimore County, Carroll County, Cecil County, Charles County, Cumberland City, Frederick County, Garrett County, Hagerstown, Howard County, Montgomery County, Ocean City, Prince Georges County, Queen Annes County, Salisbury, Talbot County, Worchester County

MD Leg SB 0373 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jermaine Winder

Position: FAV

Jermaine Winder

632 South Rogers St
Aberdeen MD 21001
443-845-9248
January 31, 2025

The Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Senator Finance Committee members,

I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 0373. I have previously served my local union (IAFF 1742) for well over a decade as union officer in every position, from shop steward to vice president. In that time I have participated in four contract negotiations across two administrations with very different political ideologies. During that time I learned just how vital binding arbitration would be for effective negotiations. This guarantee is something most of the Fire Department locals in the region have but has always been out of grasp for us. The need for this bill for us is especially important due to the many layers of government involved in our negotiations. Unfortunately, because of those layers our good faith negotiations can suffer due to personal conflicts, general indifference and the size of the workload on the part of the State's representatives. I have been part of negotiations where all these things have happened and jeopardize the good faith nature we value in our negotiations with the State. Common sense additions to our contracts, such as the scope of our health and wellness physicals, cancer and hazard material screenings, approved and provided protective gear, and terms of our members promotional process all have fallen victim to the above issues. All of these measures are not only beneficial for our members but are minimal or cost neutral, and all met with opposition. Not on the merit of the addition to the contract but for one of the previously listed issues. Having the option to take our dispute to an impartial third party arbitrator allows for good faith to remain intact for both parties.

It is for these reasons I ask for your support and a favorable report, and to give the members of IAFF Local 1742 the avenue to guarantee good faith negotiations in the future, regardless of personal or political differences.

Respectfully,

Jermaine Winder

Jermaine Winder, (Former) Vice President, IAFF Local 1742

Ltr to Chair Beidle Sen Finance 02.04.25.pdf

Uploaded by: Joshua Fannon

Position: FAV



Baltimore Fire Officers Association

Local No. 964

1030 S. LINWOOD AVENUE
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21224
(410) 276-6964 FAX: (410) 675-3930



CHARTERED FEBRUARY 20, 1948



February 4, 2025

Maryland Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
ATTN: Chair Pamela Beidle and Vice Chair Antonio Hayes
SENT VIA EMAIL

RE: Support for SB 373 State Personnel - BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department -
Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes

Dear Chair Beidle and Esteemed Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 373, which seeks to enhance the collective bargaining and arbitration processes for the dedicated uniformed fire employees of the BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department. This legislation is essential in ensuring fair negotiations and a structured dispute resolution process that benefits both the employees and the State.

BWI Airport's Fire and Rescue Department plays a critical role in maintaining public safety and responding to emergencies with professionalism and efficiency. These highly trained individuals face significant risks daily to protect travelers, airport staff, and surrounding communities. By instituting a more structured collective bargaining process with binding arbitration in case of an impasse, SB 373 ensures that their concerns regarding wages, working conditions, and benefits are addressed equitably and in a timely manner.

The inclusion of a deadline for negotiations and the establishment of a binding arbitration process creates a fair and transparent mechanism to resolve disputes without unnecessary delays. This not only promotes workplace stability but also enhances morale among first responders who deserve recognition and support for their service. Additionally, ensuring that agreements remain in effect until a successor agreement is reached prevents disruptions that could impact the department's operational readiness.

Letter to Senate Finance Committee
February 4, 2025
Page 2 of 2

Passage of SB 373 is a crucial step in fostering a more effective and fair collective bargaining framework for BWI's firefighters. I urge you and your colleagues to support this bill and advocate for its swift passage. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joshua L. Fannon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joshua L. Fannon, President
IAFF Local 964 Baltimore Fire Officers

CC: Mr. Jeffrey Buddle, President, Professional Fire Fighters of Maryland
Mr. Christian Rejonis, President, IAFF Local 1742 BWI Airport Professional Firefighters

MKM Testimony (SB 373) (02-04-25).pdf

Uploaded by: Megan Mechak

Position: FAV



McGillivray
Steele
Elkin ^{LLP}

Megan K. Mechak
mkm@mnelaborlaw.com

Testimony of Megan Mechak

SB 373 - BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department - Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes
Finance Committee - February 6, 2025

Support / Favorable

Binding interest arbitration is a critical tool to ensure that collective bargaining with employees of the BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department is fair and collaborative.

My name is Megan Mechak, and my firm represents the International Association of Fire Fighters, AFL-CIO, Local 1742, which is the exclusive representative of the fire fighters assigned to the Thurgood Marshall Baltimore-Washington International Airport Fire & Rescue Department. I also represent other public safety employees across the state of Maryland. Binding interest arbitration is an established and effective part of the collective bargaining process in jurisdictions across the state.

Public sector employees – including the brave men and women of the BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department – cannot strike. As a result, binding interest arbitration is crucial for ensuring the collective bargaining process is fair and collaborative. Binding interest arbitration not only motivates the parties to control the process by reaching an agreement, but provides for final resolution of their impasse if they do not.

Binding interest arbitration is a tool in the collective bargaining process. It offers a well-established procedure for resolving disputes that the parties, despite their good faith efforts, cannot resolve themselves. Under this bill, a neutral arbitrator will have the opportunity to mediate the dispute in an attempt to bring the parties together. Oftentimes, after months of collective bargaining, a fresh – and objective – eye can break the parties' deadlock. If they cannot agree, the arbitrator will issue a decision by selecting the more reasonable position, taking into consideration important factors like the State's ability to pay for any monetary terms and the impact of the proposals on the workers and the public.

In jurisdictions where the collective bargaining process ends in binding interest arbitration, the parties work hard to avoid that outcome because they recognize that cooperative labor relations often require compromise. As provided for in this bill, binding interest arbitration will ensure those compromises are fair for the State and the BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department employees, by providing objective, reasonable, and, if necessary, binding guidance to the parties.

I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 373.

Additional questions about binding interest arbitration are addressed on the following pages.

Testimony of Megan Mechak

SB 373 - BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department - Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes

Finance Committee - February 6, 2025

Support / Favorable

What is binding interest arbitration?

“Binding interest arbitration” is a dispute resolution process during which a neutral third party (the arbitrator) makes a final and binding decision on the terms of a new or successor Memorandum of Understanding between an employer and the workers’ union. Commonly used in public sector labor relations, the arbitrator is appointed to address the parties’ impasse after they have engaged in collective bargaining, and the arbitrator’s decision is final and binding on both parties.

What collective bargaining rights do BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department employees currently have?

- The State and the exclusive representative (IAFF Local 1742) are required to meet at reasonable times to engage in good faith collective bargaining.
- The parties shall conclude negotiations for any item requiring appropriation of funds for the following fiscal year by January 1.
- If the parties do not conclude negotiations by October 25, either party may request a fact finder be employed to make a written recommendation regarding wages, hours, and working conditions, and any other terms or conditions of employment that may be in dispute before December 1.
- Neither party is required to take any action to implement the fact finder’s decision.
- An MOU is prepared to reflect the agreed upon items, but if the parties do not agree, items may remain unresolved.

Why propose binding interest arbitration for BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department employees?

- Binding interest arbitration ensures that the parties are fair and reasonable in their approach to collective bargaining, consistent with Md. Code, State Personnel & Pensions § 3-101(d)’s obligation to engage in “good faith negotiations”
- Binding interest arbitration generally results in negotiations with less conflict and more collaboration
- Binding interest arbitration ensures that both parties present more reasonable and moderate proposals and remain open to compromise during negotiations

Is binding interest arbitration authorized for any public employees in Maryland?

Yes. Binding interest arbitration is authorized for public employees throughout Maryland, including:

- Some State employees: Md. Code, Transportation § 7-602 applies to employees of the Maryland Transit Administration and states “(i)f, in a labor dispute between the Administration and any employees described in § 7-601 of this subtitle, collective bargaining does not result in agreement, the Administration shall submit the dispute to

Testimony of Megan Mechak

SB 373 - BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department - Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes

Finance Committee - February 6, 2025

Support / Favorable

an arbitration board.”

- Public school employees: Md. Code, Education §§ 6-406, 6-507 apply to public school employees and includes a procedure for the Public Employees Relations Board to issue a binding impasse decision.
- Employees in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties, Baltimore City, and the Town of Ocean City have binding interest arbitration for fire and emergency medical services’ bargaining units through charter and local legislation.

Comparison of Current Collective Bargaining to SB 373 / HB 599

Under Present Law (SPP § 3-501)	Under SB 373 / HB 599
If the parties do not conclude negotiations before October 25, either party may request that a fact finder be used to assess issues and make a recommendation	If the parties do not reach an agreement on or before October 1, they are at impasse
The fact finder shall be employed no later than November 1	Parties will exchange last, best, and final offers within forty-eight (48) hours after impasse is reached
	Unless the impasse is resolved, the parties shall meet within five (5) business days to select an arbitrator
	Parties will submit the dispute, including their last, best, and final offers, to the arbitrator within five (5) business days of arbitrator selection
	During the twenty-one (21) days immediately following their appointment, the arbitrator may (if appropriate) attempt to resolve the impasse by acting as a neutral mediator
By November 20, the fact finder shall make written recommendations regarding wages, hours, and working conditions and any other terms of employment in dispute	If the parties are unable to resolve their impasse, the arbitrator will select one party’s last, best, and final offer after holding formal hearings as necessary
Written recommendations of the fact finder are to be delivered to the Governor, the exclusive representative, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Delegates on or before December 1	The arbitrator’s decision will be incorporated into the parties’ successor MOU
No further action required on recommendations	
Parties must conclude negotiations on economic matters by January 1 - <i>if negotiations do not result in an MOU, management can impose terms</i>	

SB373 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Pamela Beidle

Position: FAV

PAMELA G. BEIDLE
Legislative District 32
Anne Arundel County

Chair, Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight

Joint Committee on Management
of Public Funds

Spending Affordability Committee



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 6, 2025

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11 Bladen Street, Suite 3 East
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Pamela.Beidle@senate.state.md.us

SB373

State Personnel – BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department – Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes

Good afternoon, Vice Chair Hayes and Members of the Finance Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 373, State Personnel – BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department – Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes. This bill will clarify the bargaining process and formalize binding arbitration for the fire department at BWI.

The fire fighters at BWI are the only fire fighters in the state of Maryland that are state employees. They are essential to the continued operation of BWI airport. They deserve to have the promise of binding arbitration if collective bargaining arrives at an impasse, like so many other fire fighters in our state and across the country.

This bill clarifies the bargaining process, the logistics, and the roles of the stakeholders, and provides security and a path forward for the ongoing relationship between the BWI fire fighters and the state. The goal of this legislation is to rule that once an agreement is in place, whether achieved through collective bargaining or arbitration, it will be final and it will control.

I respectfully request a “Favorable Report” on SB 373.

SB373_MSBA_FAV

Uploaded by: Shaoli Sarkar, Esq.

Position: FAV



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Baltimore, MD 21201
410-685-7878 | msba.org

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200 Duke of Gloucester Street
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To: Members of the Finance Committee

From: Jim Pauli, Chair, Government Affairs Committee, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Section Council

Date: February 7, 2025

Subject: SB 373

Position: **Support** the use of arbitration to settle impasses in collective bargaining for State Personnel-BWI Airport Fire & Rescue Department

SB 373 seeks to modify the collective bargaining plan between the State and uniformed fire employees of the BWI Fire and Rescue Department to add the use of arbitration to resolve negotiation impasse.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Council of the Maryland State Bar Association supports any ADR process to assist the parties to come to some resolution on the matters they deem important. We therefore support the use of ADR processes proposed by this bill.

HB 599 was a cross-filed bill referred to the House Appropriations Committee. To date no hearing has been set beyond the First Reading by Appropriations on 1/23/25. We urge a favorable Committee report and that it conform to HB 599.

The Section **supports SB 373 so far as it offers the use of Arbitration as part of the collective bargaining plan between the State and uniformed fire employees of the BWI Fire and Rescue Department.**

Should you have any questions, please contact James Pauli, Chairman of the Government Affairs Committee and Secretary of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Section Council, jim.pauli.ijs@gmail.com

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President

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Secretary

Anna Sholl
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DBM SB373 Letter of Information .docx (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Dana Phillips

Position: INFO



Maryland

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET
AND MANAGEMENT

WES MOORE
Governor

ARUNA MILLER
Lieutenant Governor

HELENE GRADY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

Senate Bill 373 State Personnel - BWI Airport Fire and Rescue Department - Collective Bargaining and Arbitration Processes

Letter of Information

DATE: February 6th

COMMITTEE: Finance

Dear Chair Bidle and Committee Members:

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) would like to offer information on certain provisions of Senate Bill 373 for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 373 includes a broad binding arbitration provision that will require binding arbitration to take place whenever there is a dispute between the State and an exclusive bargaining representative regarding the terms and applications of a negotiated agreement. Under current law, if an impasse is reached during negotiations, either party may request a neutral fact-finder whose recommendations are advisory. Giving a private arbitrator the power to mandate funding in the proposed budget represents a significant policy shift toward granting a private, unelected official the power to prioritize among public policy needs. When deciding on the State's budget each year, the Governor and the General Assembly must balance a wide range of public policy needs within a set of resource constraints. Employee compensation is a significant portion of the State's non-mandated spending. Binding arbitration would allow a private arbitrator to have significant influence over the State's fiscal and policy priorities and this bill provides for no method of appeal or review of the private arbitrator's decision. Many states and local governments with binding arbitration have put significant limitations and guidance into their law as a result. If the committee would like to explore options to amend and pass this legislation, the department is happy to offer our support and resources to that effort.

While DBM supports the rights of employees to collectively bargain, we continue to have concerns about the control and discretion over budget priorities and agency rights as the bill is currently drafted.

For additional information, contact Dana Phillips at

45 Calvert Street • Annapolis, MD 21401-1907

Tel: 410-260-7041 • Fax: 410-974-2585 • Toll Free: 1-800-705-3493 • TTY Users: Call via Maryland Relay

<http://dbm.maryland.gov>

(410) 260-6068 or dana.phillips@maryland.gov