



A Union of Professionals
AFT-Maryland

5800 Metro Drive, Suite 100 • Baltimore, MD 21215-3226
410/764-3030 • fax: 410/764-3008
md.aft.org

Kenya Campbell
PRESIDENT

LaBrina Hopkins
SECRETARY-TREASURER

Written Testimony to the Senate Budget and Taxation
SB 764 – Education – Minimum Wage for Education Support Professionals
March 3, 2026

FAVORABLE

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee: AFT Maryland supports SB 764, which establishes a minimum wage of \$25 per hour for our state’s education support professionals (ESPs).

As the backbone of our public education system, ESPs, including paraeducators, bus drivers, custodians, and food service workers, they ensure that our schools are safe, clean, and conducive to learning. Despite their essential roles, a significant number of these professionals currently earn wages that fall far below a livable standard in Maryland.

When we fail to provide a competitive, livable wage for support staff, we see higher turnover rates and vacant positions that directly impact student outcomes and school safety. By mandating a \$25 per hour minimum wage, we will help stabilize the workforce, reduce the need for constant recruitment and training, and allow experienced professionals to remain in the careers they love.

Passing SB 764 sends a clear message that Maryland values all educators, not just through words, but through fair and equitable compensation. We urge a favorable report on SB 764.

