

# Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689



Raymond N. Jackson  
President & Business Agent  
Keith M. Bullock  
Financial Secretary Treasurer  
Barry D. Wilson  
Recording Secretary  
Romoan C. Bruce  
First Vice President  
Theus R. Jones  
Second Vice President

2701 Whitney Place, Forestville, Maryland 20747-3457  
Telephone: 301-568-6899 Facsimile: 301-568-0692  
www.atulocal689.org

## Statement of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689

HB 188

February 11, 2026

**TO: The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee**

**FROM: Benjamin Lynn, ATU Local 689 Press and Communications Associate**

Chair Valderrama and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 188 which includes much needed improvements to the state of Maryland's unemployment insurance program. ATU Local 689 supports the bill and urges you to issue a favorable report.

Maryland's unemployment insurance program is in desperate and dire need of improvements and modernization. The minimum and maximum weekly benefits are simply too low and the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund does not have enough revenue to fully sustain benefits during extreme economic downturns. Unemployment Insurance is a critical safety net that workers earn and is essential for helping people support themselves and their families after they have lost their job. Improving and expanding the state's unemployment insurance program should be a priority for all lawmakers.

House Bill 188 modernization of the state's unemployment insurance trust fund will ensure that the fund remains solvent and sustainable going forward. Additionally, the increase in the weekly benefits will provide better security to Maryland workers and help them pay essential bills until they are able to secure new employment.

ATU Local 689 would like to thank the bill's sponsor, Delegate Charkoudian for continuing to champion this important legislation. We urge the House Economic Matters committee to favorably report House Bill 188.