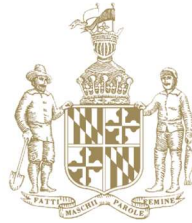


KEVIN M. HARRIS
Legislative District 27
Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's
Counties

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 302
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3700
800-492-7122 Ext. 3700
Kevin.Harris@senate.maryland.gov

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Official Sponsor Testimony in Support of SB 922: Collective Bargaining – Local
Government Employees and Public Employee Relations Act**
Senator Kevin M. Harris

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Hayes, and Members of the Finance Committee;

SB 922 extends collective bargaining rights to employees of county and municipal governments throughout our state.

As many of you may be aware, some of our public employees in county and municipal government currently do have collective bargaining rights, however, this right does not exist for all local government employees. This legislation does not mandate collective bargaining; it enables collective bargaining for all local government employees. The decision to organize and collectively bargain should rest with the employees.

Additionally, subject to certain exceptions, this legislation applies the Public Employee Relations Act to local governments. In 2023, the General Assembly made significant progress towards modernizing and streamlining our public sector collective bargaining laws by passing the Public Employee Relations Act. This legislation consolidated various public sector collective bargaining statutes for K-12, state, and higher education workers to streamline processes and procedures for labor relations. Additionally, the legislation merged three different public sector labor boards into one, the Public Employee Relations Board.

This legislation continues the trend toward streamlining and modernizing our public sector labor relations, while also providing an additional Deputy Director position for the Public Employee Relations Board to account for their expanded jurisdiction.

Finally, SB 922 grants local government jurisdictions that have existing collective bargaining laws a one year phase-in for them to seek certain exemptions from this bill.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 922.