



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

Affiliated with the National AFL-CIO

Donna S. Edwards
President

Samuel Epps, IV
Secretary-Treasurer

📞 410.280.2233

📠 410.280.2956

📍 7 School Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2096

SB 136 - Collective Bargaining - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission - Police Officers

House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

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SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 136. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

SB 136 is a straightforward fix to Maryland law. In 2019, the General Assembly passed SB 703, which created the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission, and transferred the Comptroller's Field Enforcement Division (FED) under the new commission. Earlier in 2012, Maryland had extended collective bargaining rights to FED law enforcement officers in the Comptroller's office. However, when SB 703 moved the division to the ATC, (now the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Cannabis Commission - ATCC), the law did not clearly state that these employees retained the same bargaining rights. Because of that gap, any police officers hired after the transfer were no longer eligible for collective bargaining.

This legislation simply corrects that oversight. It restores collective bargaining rights for ATCC police officers regardless of when they were hired. Collective bargaining is essential for these officers as it provides a structured process for addressing workplace issues and strengthens communication between the officers and commission leadership.

This is a simple correction of the law, but it has a meaningful impact. It ensures workers have the same voice and protections they previously relied on.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 136.



unions@mddclabor.org



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