
ROBERT G. CASSILLY
Harford County Executive



ROBERT S. McCORD
Director of Administration

March 9, 2026

The Honorable Melissa Wells
Chair, House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
145 Lowe House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Opposition to House Bill 1492 - Collective Bargaining – Public Employees – Revocation of Certification and School and Library Employees' Right to Strike

Dear Chairwoman Wells and Committee Members,

On behalf of the citizens of Harford County, I write in strong opposition to House Bill 1492.

This legislation would grant public school employees the legal right to strike, fundamentally changing Maryland's long-standing approach to public education labor relations. Public schools are not optional services; they are essential institutions that families rely on every day. Allowing strikes by school employees places students and parents directly in the middle of labor disputes and risks shutting down classrooms across our state.

When teachers or school staff walk out, the real victims are the students. Instruction stops, learning is disrupted, and families are forced to scramble for childcare. For many working parents, particularly those in hourly or essential jobs, an unexpected school closure creates immediate financial and logistical hardship. The ripple effects reach far beyond the school system.

Equally concerning is the negotiating leverage this bill would create. Allowing strikes in public education effectively permits students' access to education to become a bargaining tool in labor disputes. That is a dangerous precedent. Maryland's current collective bargaining system was intentionally designed to prevent that outcome by providing structured mediation and arbitration processes that resolve disputes while keeping schools open.

HB 1492 also removes important enforcement tools available to the Public Employee Relations Board, weakening oversight and accountability in the collective bargaining process. Taken together, these changes tilt the negotiating framework in a way that could encourage prolonged disputes and increase instability in local school systems.

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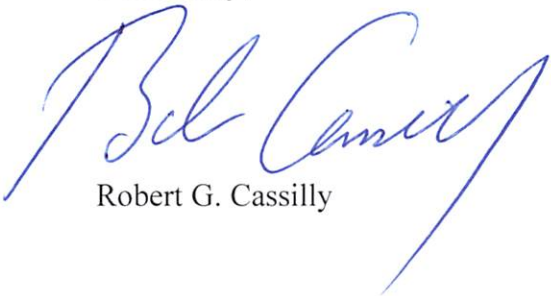
Local governments and school boards already face extraordinary fiscal pressures. Allowing strikes not only threatens educational continuity but also undermines the ability of taxpayers' representatives to manage school system budgets responsibly.

Educators deserve fair treatment and respectful negotiation. But students should never be used as leverage in labor disputes. Maryland's education system must remain focused on the stability and continuity that our children and families depend upon.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge an unfavorable report on House Bill 1492.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bob Cassilly", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Robert G. Cassilly