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Budget and Taxation Committee

Capital Budget Subcommittee
Health and Human Services Subcommittee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes on Senate Bill 0028

Bill Title: Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Hearing Date: April 2nd, 2026

Dear Chair and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of Senate Bill 0028, the *Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2026*, which modernizes and strengthens the collective bargaining process for Maryland's State employees.

This legislation establishes a structured and transparent framework for resolving labor negotiations by introducing the use of neutral arbitrators to oversee negotiations and assist in resolving disputes. In the event of an impasse, the bill creates a clear arbitration process, ensuring that negotiations can move forward efficiently while maintaining fairness for all parties involved.

Senate Bill 0028 also enhances accountability by requiring that each state budget include the appropriations necessary to fund the terms and conditions agreed upon in memoranda of understanding. This provision ensures that negotiated agreements are meaningfully implemented and not left unfunded, strengthening trust between employees and the State.

Importantly, the bill balances these reforms by maintaining legislative oversight and fiscal responsibility, as arbitration decisions related to funding remain contingent upon approval by the General Assembly and are subject to the limitations of the State budget.

By promoting good-faith negotiations, improving dispute resolution mechanisms, and ensuring that agreements are honored through the budget process, Senate Bill 0028 represents a significant step forward in supporting Maryland's public workforce.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray'.

Cory V. McCray
45th District