



Testimony - HB 69, Labor and Employment - Exemptions From Overtime Pay -  
Administrative, Executive, or Professional Capacity  
Favorable  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
February 19, 2026  
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Honorable Chairwoman Wells & Members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents thousands of public service workers across Maryland, including employees in public schools, higher education, and public institutions. Our members are dedicated professionals who serve Maryland's communities every day. They deserve workplaces grounded in respect, fairness, and paid what they are due.

HB 69 is a commonsense and long-overdue reform that ensures Maryland workers are fairly compensated for the hours they work. By clearly defining and modernizing the salary thresholds and duties tests required to classify someone as an administrative, executive, or professional employee exempt from overtime, this bill strengthens protections against worker misclassification and wage theft.

For too long, vague or outdated exemption standards have allowed employers to label workers as "administrative" or "professional" while paying salaries that fall far short of reflecting true executive authority or professional autonomy. As a result, many workers routinely work 50, 60, or more hours per week without overtime pay — even when their job duties do not meet the spirit or intent of the exemption.

HB 69 accomplishes several important goals:

- It aligns Maryland law with updated federal standards and salary definitions.

- It establishes clear, phased-in salary thresholds to ensure that workers classified as exempt are truly compensated at a level that reflects executive or professional responsibility.
- It protects middle-class workers from being exploited through misclassification.

SEIU Local 500 represents public service and nonprofit workers across Maryland — including educators, school support staff, and higher education employees — who know firsthand the impact of long hours and limited compensation. When workers are improperly classified as exempt, it erodes morale, increases burnout, and undermines economic stability for working families.

Overtime protections exist for a reason: they recognize that workers' time has value. If an employer requires additional labor, they should compensate that labor fairly. By tightening the exemption standards, HB 69 reinforces the principle that overtime exemptions should be the exception — not the rule.

At a time when working families are facing rising housing, healthcare, and transportation costs, Maryland must ensure that wage protections keep pace. HB 69 helps ensure that employees who do not truly function as executives, administrators, or professionals are not denied the overtime pay they deserve.

For these reasons, SEIU Local 500 respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 69.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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