



METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE COUNCIL AFL-CIO Unions

**HB 1492 Collective Bargaining - Public Employees - Revocation of Certification and School
and Library Employees' Right to Strike
Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
March 11th, 2026
Favorable**

To: Chair & members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

From: Courtney Jenkins, President, Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL CIO Unions

My name is Courtney Jenkins, and I serve as President of the Metro Baltimore AFL CIO, representing thousands of union members and working families across our region. I strongly support House Bill 1492, which strengthens the collective bargaining rights of public employees, including school staff, library employees, and other state and local public workers.

This legislation is particularly important because it recognizes and safeguards the right to strike, a critical tool for workers to ensure their voices are heard in the workplace. For decades, unions have relied on the ability to engage in organized, lawful strike activity when collective bargaining reaches an impasse. The right to strike is not just a bargaining tool; it is a fundamental mechanism that balances power between workers and management, ensuring fair contracts, safe working conditions, and protections for public services. Importantly, HB 1492 does not mandate that employees strike; it simply ensures that public workers have this lawful option available as a last resort if negotiations fail.

HB 1492 modernizes Maryland's labor law by removing barriers that have historically limited workers' ability to exercise this right. By protecting the right to strike while maintaining orderly procedures and safeguards, this bill reinforces the effectiveness of collective bargaining, giving workers real leverage to negotiate fair wages, benefits, and working conditions. Without this tool, employees face an imbalance of power that can result in contracts that undervalue their labor and compromise the quality of public services.

The Metro Baltimore AFL-CIO believes that a workforce that can negotiate in good faith with the clear option to use strike activity is necessary. This makes for a workforce that can secure fair treatment, maintain high professional standards, and deliver better services to Maryland residents. HB 1492 is a critical step in protecting these rights, strengthening unions, and ensuring that public employees are respected and empowered in the workplace.



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For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 1492.

Thank you for your consideration.

Courtney Jenkins
President
Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL CIO