



Testimony - HB 1090, Montgomery County - Board of Education - Mandatory School  
Holidays MC 9-26  
Unfavorable  
House Ways & Means Committee  
March 11, 2026  
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Director of Political & Legislative Affairs on Behalf of SEIU Local 500

Honorable Chairwoman Wilkins & Members of the House Ways & Means Committee:

SEIU Local 500 represents more than 20,000 working people across Maryland and the District of Columbia, including over 10,000 non-instructional educational support professionals in Montgomery County Public Schools. These workers include paraeducators, food service workers, bus attendants, security staff, building service workers, and clerical staff who ensure schools operate safely and effectively for students every day.

House Bill 1090 would require Montgomery County Public Schools to close to students for additional holidays beginning in the 2027–2028 school year, including Diwali, Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr, Lunar New Year, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Juneteenth.

SEIU Local 500 respects the significance of these holidays and the diverse communities they represent. However, as written, this bill creates a serious and unintended consequence for the workers who keep our schools running.

For thousands of educational support professionals, when schools close outside of the negotiated school calendar those days often become “no-work, no-pay” days. Many of these workers are hourly employees who already struggle to make ends meet. Adding additional mandated closure days could result in lost wages for more than 10,000 support professionals in Montgomery County—workers who prepare meals for students, support children with disabilities, maintain safe buildings, and provide essential services that allow classrooms to function.

The result is that a well-intentioned effort to recognize important cultural and religious holidays would effectively shift the cost of those closures onto some of the lowest-paid workers in the school system.

We stand in opposition to such a policy outcome. If this committee is to address this problem, SEIU Local 500 respectfully requests the Committee amend House Bill 1090 to ensure that any additional mandated school holidays are treated as paid holidays for non-instructional school employees or otherwise guarantee that these workers do not lose compensation as a result of the closures by funding paid professional development to educational support professionals in Montgomery County affected by these closures. Anything less is a policy outcome that creates economic hardship for the lowest paid workers in Montgomery County Public Schools.

Without such protections, the bill would result in paycheck instability and uncertainty for thousands of workers who are already struggling to afford housing, childcare, and other basic necessities in Montgomery County.

School calendar decisions are complex and affect students, families, educators, and support staff alike. If the State chooses to mandate additional closures, it should also ensure that the workers who keep schools running are not forced to bear the financial burden of those decisions.

For these reasons, SEIU Local 500 respectfully urges the Committee to adopt amendments guaranteeing paid status for these holidays. Without such amendments, we respectfully urge an unfavorable report on House Bill 1090.

Thank you for your time and consideration.