



December 1, 2023

Patrick Moran
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Jeff Fiory
Local 1072

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Local 3655

Re. 2024 Maryland General Assembly AFSCME 3 Legislative Priorities

Dear Legislative Leaders and Advocates:

This year, we've come together to form a united AFSCME Maryland, and we're thrilled to continue working with you in the upcoming year to improve working conditions and public services across Maryland. Thank you for your continued support for our members who keep our schools, cities, counties, and state running.

Our priorities for the 2024 Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session are as follows:

The Arbitration Reform for State Employees Act of 2024

This bill improves union contract negotiations in state government and in our public higher education institutions. It establishes more workable timelines to ensure these negotiations are concluded in time for budget submissions, requires the selection of a neutral arbitrator to mediate the negotiations, and establishes a process for binding interest arbitration in the event of an impasse. Sen. Cory McCray and Del. Jazz Lewis are sponsors.

Expanding Collective Bargaining Rights

All workers deserve collective bargaining rights. Supervisors play a vital role in running our state agencies. They are organizing with AFSCME to have a greater voice. We are pushing legislation that enables collective bargaining rights for over 4,000 supervisors who work in the executive branch of state government. The state has already put these supervisors into a single bargaining unit S for supervisors. This legislation maintains that unit, and simply removes their exemption from bargaining where agencies already have collective bargaining rights for their employees. Once enabling legislation is passed, these supervisors will have the opportunity to certify the exclusive bargaining representative of their choosing. Sen. Ben Kramer and Del. Mark Chang are sponsors.

We are also supporting separate legislation to enable statewide collective bargaining rights for library workers. This legislation is sponsored by Sen. Clarence Lam and Del. Jared Solomon.

Rebuilding State Government

Since 2010, the State has not kept up with annual COLAs and merit increases to employees or properly adjusted staffing levels to correspond with increases in the state's population and new legislative mandates.



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We have a huge hole to fill now, with state employee salaries lagging inflation by 14% in this same time period, and thousands of remaining position shortages and vacancies. Despite renewed recruitment efforts under the Moore Administration, sadly, state agencies are still not on track to hit their vacancy reduction targets this year. This is impacting the services our state government can provide with high caseloads and overtime rates still burdening many state agencies. We believe that raising wages will be the best way to rebuild our government and hope to make improvements to the benefits being offered for state employment too, including fixing disparities in the retirement benefit for certain employees in the Department of Health. We also continue to support efforts to raise revenue and prevent the outsourcing of state work in our agencies and our higher education campuses.

Together, we hope to advance the bargaining rights of state employees and improve the important services that Marylanders rely on daily. For additional information, please contact AFSCME 3 Legislative Director Denise Gilmore at dgilmore@afscmemd.org or (410) 350-1711.

Sincerely,

Patrick Moran
President, AFSCME Maryland Council 3.