

**SB0004\_Reprsent Maryland\_Favorable .pdf**

Uploaded by: Demnowicz, Cristi

Position: FAV



**BILL:** SB0004

**BILL TITLE:** Maryland Public Ethics Law - Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in Investigation - Prohibition

**BILL SPONSOR:** Senator Edwards

**COMMITTEE:** EHEA

**POSITION:** Favorable

**HEARING DATE:** February 4, 2021

**TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB0004**

Cristi Demnowicz, Chair  
Represent Maryland

Whistleblowers and witnesses are essential to maintaining a healthy democracy that works for all people. Protecting them from retaliation for participating in investigations should be paramount. Please find this bill favorable and move to the senate floor for a vote.

Sincerely,  
Cristi Demnowicz  
Chair  
Represent Maryland  
Maryland Voter-LD7

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Represent Maryland is a grassroots anti-corruption group of citizen advocates that #FightForDemocracy in Maryland. Our democracy solutions include: Public Election Funds, Independent Redistricting, Special Elections, Ranked Choice Voting, Increased Ethics and Transparency, and Increased Voter Participation.

Learn more about our work at [www.RepresentMaryland.org](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)

[Cristi@RepresentMaryland.org](mailto:Cristi@RepresentMaryland.org)

Authorized by Represent Maryland PAC, T Miller, Treasurer  
[www.RepresentMaryland.org](http://www.RepresentMaryland.org)

# **SB 4 - Retaliation for Reporting or Participating**

Uploaded by: Edwards, Donna

Position: FAV



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Office. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

*President*

Donna S. Edwards

*Secretary-Treasurer*

Gerald W. Jackson

**SB 4 – Maryland Public Ethics Law – Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in  
Investigation - Prohibition  
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee  
February 4, 2021**

**SUPPORT**

**Donna S. Edwards  
President  
Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Chairman and members of the Committee thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 4 – Maryland Public Ethics Law – Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in Investigation - Prohibition. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO. On behalf of the 340,000 union members in the state of Maryland, I offer the following comments.

Corruption can be difficult to root out, but we must continue to strive to do so, to maintain the integrity and legitimacy of our government. It has always been the position of organized labor to increase transparency and accountability in government. We know that all levels of government report to us: the voters, taxpayers, and residents of Maryland.

SB 4 provides greater accountability by prohibiting any retaliation against a state worker from reporting on unethical behavior or participating in an ethics investigation. Without this shield, workers are far less likely to report on potential corruption and rule breaking, having to weigh the option of doing the right thing and potentially losing their job. Instead of putting them in a no-win situation, we need to encourage them to speak up when they see something wrong, firm in the knowledge that we will have their backs in the fight.

We need to protect and shield public servants who do the right thing. We need to provide them with the support necessary to keep government transparent and honest.

**For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB 4.**

**SB4\_AFSCME3\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Gilmore , Denise

Position: FAV



190 West Ostend St., #201  
Baltimore, MD 21230  
Phone: 410.547.1515  
Fax: 410.837.5436

Patrick Moran - President

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**Testimony**  
**SB 4 – Maryland Public Ethics Law –**  
**Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in Investigation – Prohibition**  
**Support**

AFSCME Council 3 represents 30,000 State and Higher Education employees in Maryland. We support SB 4. This legislation prohibits an official or employee from retaliating against an individual who reports or participates in an investigation pertaining to a violation of Maryland Public Ethics Law. We believe that individuals who report violations of the Maryland Public Ethics Law deserve to be protected from retaliation and should be encouraged to come forward.

SB 4 is a good government Bill that we are proud to support wholeheartedly.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to provide a favorable report. Thank you.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.  
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.  
800.492.1996

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**HB363-SB4.pdf**

Uploaded by: Lord, Jillian

Position: FWA

**SB4/HB363****Maryland Public Ethics Law – Retaliation for Reporting or  
Participating in Investigation – Prohibition**

Good Morning/Afternoon,

My name is Jillian Lord. I would first like to say that I am here as a private Maryland citizen and not a State employee. Therefore, anything I claim or state begins with *“I’ve been told”*.

I am **Favorable w/Amendment** of **SB4/HB363** - *Maryland Public Ethics Law – Retaliation for Reporting or Participating in Investigation – Prohibition*.

There are too many State employees, *with integrity*, who have suffered retaliation simply because they tell the truth and refuse to participate in the discriminatory, illegal, and unethical practices, of those in their chain of command.

An employee's fear of retaliation *and* loss of employment for reporting or even *participating* in an investigation is **REAL**. Retaliation is commonly practiced within *many* State agencies, in an attempt to prevent those in authority from being held accountable for their illegal actions. These methods have had the desired effect of keeping most State employees, *mainly minorities*, silent and submissive... *so I’ve been told*.

This is why **SB4/ HB363** is so important.



This Bill should also help bring accountability and transparency to **all** areas within **every** State agency.

Supporting **SB4**/HB363 gives me hope that a Delegate, Senator, or even our Governor will sponsor a Bill that protects State employees even more.

I propose that The Offices of Fair Practice, within State agencies, be stand-alone independent departments whose **entire** staff are designated as career only employees, and not hired by an Appointing Authority or Political Affiliation.

They should be allowed to testify **for or against**, State agencies at E.E.O.C.<sup>1</sup>, M.C.C.R.<sup>2</sup>, or State hearings.

It is time for us to **STOP** allowing these perpetrators/victimizers to “*resign*” or “*retire*” without any type of disciplinary action. **STOP** transferring them to other State agencies to protect them from facing their victims at one of these hearings...instead, give the *victims justice*.

In the words of our late John Lewis: *"When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something."*

**I am. What about you?**

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Commission on Civil Rights