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dslindsay@aacc.edu**SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE****March 4, 2021****TESTIMONY****Submitted by****Dr. Dawn Lindsay, President****SB 746: Education - Community Colleges - Collective Bargaining****Position: Unfavorable**

I am Dr. Dawn Lindsay, president of Anne Arundel Community College.

The extra expense associated with collective bargaining will put a severe strain on the budgets of community colleges. AACC alone estimates that the cost of staffing to engage in collective bargaining and increased expenses to meet union demands to be approximately \$1.96 million dollars in the first year.

For many years, the State has not fully funded its obligations under the CADE funding formula, leaving community colleges to do more with less to meet with education and workforce needs of the students they support. State aid to community colleges has been reduced by over \$141 million since 2008. If the State legislature wants to implement collective bargaining, then the Bill should be revised to include a provision that collective bargaining cannot be implemented until the CADE formula is fully funded by the State.

Community colleges are loathe to increase tuition during this unprecedented time of need for their students. Even if community colleges wanted to increase their tuition, the Governor has capped tuition increases at 4% per year, which simply will not cover the increased costs associated with collective bargaining.

This leaves the county budget as the only viable source for the additional funds to support this legislation. Yet, the legislation does not provide the counties with an opportunity to decide whether the counties will support this enabling legislation.

This Bill creates an unfunded mandate where the only result will be long, drawn out negotiations where very little is gained by the represented employees because there is simply no funding to support the demands.

We have concerns that the Bill includes the potential for six bargaining units. Allowing this many units will lead to competing interests among the workforce. It would be unwieldy and excessively costly. As currently drafted, the Bill has no minimum number of members for a bargaining unit. It is not be reasonable to add to the expense, staffing, and workload that managing a unit would require for very small bargaining units of less than 20 employees.

The current Bill prohibits community colleges from engaging in debate and discussion regarding unionization. This ban on employer speech is unreasonable. Without both sides being able to express its view regarding unionization, employees will hear only one side of the issue, may be given misleading information, and will not be able to make an informed decision.

We are very concerned about the ability of a union to be certified without an election. An exclusive representative should never be designated simply by a showing of interest. A decision as important as deciding whether an employee wants to be represented for purposes of collective bargaining must only be decided by a secret ballot election. Additionally, there should be a provision that the Board can only designate an employee organization as the exclusive representative if a minimum of 50% of the eligible members of the unit cast a vote.

For these reasons, I request that the Finance Committee provide an unfavorable report for this Bill or consider significant amendments.