

March 4, 2021

**Senate Bill 746 - Education – Community Colleges Collective Bargaining Bill
The Maryland Community College Employees Freedom to Collectively Bargain Act of 2021**

SUPPORT

Dear Members of the Finance Committee,

This bill to expand collective bargaining rights to community college employees would give employees the freedom to choose whether to join a union. It would not mandate unionizing, force union membership or membership dues, or cause any automatic cost increases for colleges.

As a proud union member, I know firsthand the benefits a union can bring to the work place for both the employer and the employee. As an employee of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) for almost 30 years, I am able to collaborate with my employer on workplace safety, professional development and career growth opportunities. My ideas are respected, valued, sought-after, and acted on. By respecting union members, students see and learn how to positively interact with all citizens of our communities.

I have attended hearings in the General Assembly for many years to support iterations of this bill as it worked through committees. Every single year my Senator, Brian Feldman, has risen in support of this bill and how it has so positively impacted our own Montgomery College. At Montgomery College, there has never been a need to raise student tuition, not by one penny, because of collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining affords many benefits for employers. One benefit is that faculty have a say in their workplace and are able to collaborate on improvements for their programs and for their campuses and students. At Montgomery College, collective bargaining has provided a means to support faculty in acquiring the use of office space to improve student access to their professors for help with coursework. And it has raised the level of respect for all staff. By improving staff and faculty respect, you improve student respect, which improves overall student engagement and success. Please vote yes on SB 746.

Thank you.

Sally Murek

D15

sallymurek@gmail.com