



Maryland Classified Employees Association

SUPERVISORS UNITED FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

SB 298

State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Supervisory and Managerial Employees

February 26, 2023

SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Janette Charlton and I am a Health Facilities Surveyor Coordinator at the Maryland Department of Health, Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), in Columbia MD and I am a new supervisor who has worked for the state since January 2003. I am a future member of Supervisors United for Collective Bargaining and the Maryland Classified Employees Association, AFT local 1935. As a state supervisor, currently excluded from the state's collective bargaining law for Maryland employees, I am here today to advocate for HB 183, and ask this committee for a favorable report.

I supervise a team of eight nurse and program surveyors who conduct inspections throughout Maryland to ensure the health and safety of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in group homes and receiving services from the Developmental Disabilities Administration. I started at OHCQ as a surveyor conducting inspections myself in 2009, and I first applied to be a supervisor in 2015 when a position first became available. The position was ultimately given to an applicant outside the agency. I was disappointed of course but I continued to work at OHCQ as a surveyor until 2022, when I again decided to apply for an open supervisor position. I was finally promoted in February 2022, after having been a surveyor since 2009. In that time I saw people from outside the agency consistently given supervisory roles over myself and my colleagues despite our experience and degrees. And because state salaries are public information, I know that some of these supervisors in my same position (and some of the nurses I supervise) are paid more than me despite my years of state service, background and knowledge. I would say that 90% of the co-workers I began with in 2009 ultimately quit OHCQ. Morale here is very low.

I was told during the hiring process that because I am already a state employee, I had no ability to negotiate my pay when I became a supervisor. I was hired at a time when the hiring authority seemed to make arbitrary decisions on what the starting salaries should be. I have co-workers who made more and sometimes less than me despite doing the exact same job, and as far as I am aware no one has ever sought to correct these essentially unfair labor practices for those of us vested employees who have worked with the state the longest and have become supervisors, for those of us who throughout the years have most weathered the brunt of furloughs, stalled salary raises, insurance increases, etc.

To conclude, when state collective bargaining law was introduced and passed over 20 years ago, we as supervisors were erroneously excluded, even though we are state workers and do



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not hire, fire, promote, or adjust grievances for any state employee. We again call this committee to issue a favorable report for SB 298. Thank you.