

Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals / BILL
#HB1234/#SB735

Official Testimony; Position: **FAVORABLE**

To the Ways and Means and Appropriations Committees:

My name is Erin Shaw and I am a Staff Specialist in the District Office of the Baltimore City Public School System who works closely with ESPs, and I am s member of our unions' PRSP Chapter. I support the Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals / BILL #HB1234/#SB735.

It has become apparent to me over the short two years I have been at BCPS the incredible breadth of skills and responsibilities that are on the plates of ESPs in our District. The wages they are paid are absolutely inequitable and insufficient. As part of my role, I help to organize PD for School Secretaries and Office Assistants. I have spent many hours with them in the front offices of schools helping, observing, and talking to them about their experiences. These professionals manage payroll, enrollment, transportation, records, immunizations, and more – while answering phone calls from stakeholders, receiving students and parents, managing email communications, answering to principals, and receiving the wide range of people coming through the door. The amount of technical, organizational, and interpersonal skills that these roles require is stunning—and the stress levels and workloads are high. These individuals are the heart of the school, and are depended on by so many.

Education Support Professionals are just that—*professionals*—and they deserve professional wages. I strongly urge this committee to issue a favorable decision to create a Workgroup to Study the Wages of Education Support Professionals.

Respectfully,

Erin Shaw
Staff Specialist, System Learning & Development
Baltimore City Public Schools
emshaw@bcps.k12.md.us