

Written Testimony Submitted for the Senate Finance Committee
Testimony of Sabrina Razvi
SB 591 –The Library Workers Empowerment Act
February 29th, 2024

SUPPORT

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Senate Finance:

My name is Sabrina Razvi, and I am a Library Associate at the Severn Branch of the Anne Arundel County Public Library System. I have many hopes for the future of our libraries. My hope is that collective bargaining will allow for a fair process to negotiate over our wages, hours, and working conditions. This will support our financial security and our ability to continue living in the county that I help make a home for hundreds of patrons a week.

Better working conditions will help support my emotional well-being and allow me to perform better at work with less work related stress. As frontline workers, we face a variety of challenges that weigh on us day in and day out. With no right to collectively bargain, we bear these challenges silently, without the support we need to succeed.

With fewer opportunities to move up in our field without a masters degree in library science, those who cannot afford more schooling end up looking for library positions in other counties that have higher pay for their current position, or these workers end up leaving the field altogether. It is incredibly disheartening to see talented, caring coworkers leave our library system because of these circumstances. We are often short staffed during peak hours and left in a high stress environment where we do not have adequate time to serve all customers efficiently. Our Building Care Technicians are also expected to take on risky maintenance procedures that they have not been trained for. I know we can do better, but we need the accountability and protected voice at work that only come through collective bargaining.

I ask you to support this legislation to keep library workers working here in Anne Arundel County, and in Maryland as a whole. We want to advocate for ourselves at the table, but first we need you to advocate for us in the capital. Please support SB 591. Thank you.

Sabrina Razvi
Library Associate
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