



## House Bill 1370

### *Labor and Employment – Employment Rights for Local Government Employees - Establishment*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 7, 2017

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 1370. This bill would require all counties to enact local laws authorizing collective bargaining between the county and any employee organization that the county has recognized as an exclusive representative of its employees.

Currently, many county government employers have some form of collective bargaining with their employees. This law requires an expansion of collective bargaining that would require all counties to extend collective bargaining rights to all their employees - except for supervisory, managerial, or confidential employees, and elected or appointed officials. This is a prescriptive, one-size-fits-all design that would expand collective bargaining rights in a third of Maryland's counties.

Maryland county governments vary in many ways. They come in different forms of government, including charter, commission, and code home rule. They are different sizes, ranging from less than two hundred employees to more than ten thousand. And, they have different levels of collective bargaining rights. Some authorize collective bargaining for all the employees described in HB 1370, some have it for public safety employees, and others do not currently have collective bargaining agreements.

Requiring even Maryland's smallest county governments and any municipal governments in Maryland that have more than 20 employees to authorize collective bargaining to almost all their employees will create a new administrative burden, and could also create additional personnel costs. The low threshold and broad application of HB 1370 puts pressure on some of the state's smallest jurisdictions, which may be least able to accommodate additional administration and costs.

Despite their differences, Maryland county governments all have one thing in common. Their goal is to provide for the health, safety, and wellbeing of their residents, and that of future generations. Allowing some reasonable flexibility in local governance can support counties as they strive to reach this common goal. For this reasons, MACo requests an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 1370.