

BRIAN J. FELDMAN
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December 11, 2009

Mr. Gino Renne, President
UFCW Local 1994, MCGEO
600 S. Frederick Ave., Suite 200
Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877

Dear Gino:

Bob Stewart asked me to review certain proposed state legislation that is planned to be introduced by Delegate Tom Hucker (D-20) during the 2010 Legislative Session. The bill relates to the establishment of a collective bargaining process between certain library employees and library system employers in Maryland. Having reviewed the proposed legislation, I endorse the process contemplated by the legislation and am willing to serve as a co-sponsor of the bill.

As a threshold matter, I endorse the concept of collective bargaining and the right of employees to organize and have union representation on workplace matters. My assessment of the proposed legislation stems, in large part, from the positive experience we have had in Montgomery County since 1986 when Montgomery County government employees, including the County's library department employees, were given the right to form and join unions for the purpose of negotiating with the County on issues relating to wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Having an independent organization advocating for Montgomery County employees has certainly been beneficial to government workers in terms of protecting jobs and achieving hard fought economic benefits. However, the collaborative process that has developed over time between MCGEO and the County has also yielded significant improvements in workplace productivity, efficiency, dispute resolution issues, employee morale and professionalism, all of which have benefitted County residents. The Montgomery County experience would likely apply with equal force to the collective bargaining process contemplated in the proposed legislation. Finally, the bill strikes an appropriate balance between the relative rights of the union, library employees who choose not to organize a union, and management.

I look forward to co-sponsoring the proposed legislation in the upcoming legislative session and then working with Delegate Hucker and others in the General Assembly to ensure its passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian J. Feldman".

Brian J. Feldman