

**To the Maryland General Assembly:**

For years our union, AFSCME Maryland, has been raising the alarm about the staffing crisis in important agencies in the state of Maryland. Under the Hogan administration, staffing levels have become dangerously low putting employees and community members at risk.

Because of incompetence, a lack of respect for employees and a refusal to remain competitive with the job market in Maryland, the Hogan Administration has been unable to recruit and retain dedicated employees. Funded positions continue to be unfilled for years creating huge increases in workloads, unsafe and dangerous working conditions and heavy burn out among current employees. Although persistent understaffing is present in all state agencies, because of the nature of the work, the problem is most stark in the agencies which engage with Marylanders in crisis.

- This staffing crisis is creating physical dangers for staff and the residents they serve. Just last week a staff person at Spring Grove was brutally assaulted. He is still in Shock Trauma five days later. This is just one example of a series of violent assaults on public servants. Without proper staff, the risk of violence will only continue to grow.
- The staffing crisis is preventing the State of Maryland from performing the rehabilitative functions they are designed to perform. Whether in the prisons, a Parole and Probation office, in a juvenile facility or a state hospital, the goal is to change the trajectory of a person's life. Without proper staffing these institutions turn into ineffective, dangerous warehouses. A lack of proper resources now creates a need for more resources later.

We call upon the Legislature to immediately convene Emergency Hearings to examine the causes of the staffing crisis and what steps can be taken to alleviate it.

**In Solidarity,**

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