

WHEREAS, The State enacted the "State Personnel Management Reform Act of 1996" to establish a decentralized personnel management system in which State departments and agencies were given significant responsibility over the management of their workforce; and

WHEREAS, Personnel reform eliminated the classified and unclassified services and established the skilled, professional, management, and executive services; and

WHEREAS, The unclassified service consisted mostly of "at-will" employees, and after 1996, most of these at-will employees were placed in the management or executive services or were identified as "special appointments" in the State Personnel Management System; and

WHEREAS, The intent of the General Assembly with the enactment of the 1996 personnel reform law was not to create a higher number of at-will employees; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly recognizes that an effective State personnel system is essential for effective provision of State services and that most State employees should not be concerned over job security because of political changes or inappropriate management practices; and

WHEREAS, The General Assembly established the Special Committee on State Employee Rights and Protections in August 2005 to examine whether Maryland law provides sufficient protections for State employees, particularly at-will employees, against involuntary separations for illegal and unconstitutional reasons; and

WHEREAS, The Special Committee on State Employee Rights and Protections completed its work in October 2006 with several recommendations to alter the laws governing at-will State employment, now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article - State Personnel and Pensions**

1-101.

(c) "Class" means a category of one or more similar positions, as established by the Secretary in accordance with this article.

4-201.