

Delores G. Kelley, Chair  
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 658  
Supporting

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Graduate students are the lifeblood of research and education at the University of Maryland. So much of my own success as a Professor is due to the dedication, insights, and hard work of the graduate students I have had the pleasure of working with over the past 14 years of my career. Without them, nothing would get done.

And yet, according to MIT's Living Wage calculator, the amount that an individual must earn in the State of Maryland to support themselves is \$31,366.40 per year. In Prince George's County, it is \$36,483.20 per year. How much do our best-paid graduate students get paid in the Computer Science department? About \$27,000 per year, assuming they receive "double pay" over the summer. Not only is this substantially lower than their living wage; not only is this bordering on poverty level in a rather expensive county; not only is this substantially lower than many competing graduate programs; it is substantially lower than they deserve, and they deserve the right to fight for better wages and better working conditions.

Graduate students make research run. The vast majority of work that supports the \$667 million in extramural funding that came into UMD last year is done by graduate students. More than that, with our increasing student enrollments and non-increasing faculty levels, graduate students are, more than ever, tasked with not just the research side of success, but also in running teaching programs, teaching classes, and even providing administrative support, often in ways that do not help their own careers.

I strongly support SB 658; it will make our graduate students stronger and happier, which will make our university stronger.

Sincerely,

Hal Daumé III  
Ph.D., Computer Science, 2006  
Perotto Chair Professor  
4150 Iribe Center, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742  
hal3@umd.edu