

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Beth Guay, Librarian III, University of Maryland Libraries**

HB 275

State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

February 14, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the House Appropriations Committee. My name is Beth Guay and I am a Librarian at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for 26 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to HB 275. It is clear that the right of collective bargaining should be extended to all of higher education in Maryland.

UMD librarians are classified as non-tenured, continuing contract faculty, which provides an opportunity to gain permanent status, similar to tenure. One would think that permanent status would help the Libraries retain its best performers.

Permanent status requires a rigorous review process which comes at an expense of time and money. In 2018, 9 librarians were promoted to ranks with permanent status. Between 2019 and 2022, five of the nine left for positions at other academic institutions or the Library of Congress (4 for positions in the DMV). Three of the 5 were parents of young children. Similar occurrences of promotions followed by departures have continued. Transparency regarding salary increases for promotion is lacking.

Low salaries and excessive workloads are apparent contributors to the Libraries' retention problem. Librarians' salaries are not competitive with other academic and federal government librarian salaries in the DMV. When librarians leave, their responsibilities are often assigned to those who remain, increasing workloads.

Junior faculty are leaving as well, not due to an inability to meet the requirements for promotion. Of one hired in 2018 who left in 2022, their supervisor's praise of their performance included remarks about the additional responsibilities they had taken on in 2022.

The State of Maryland's investments in library faculty ultimately reward institutions outside of the University and of Maryland. I believe that enacting HB 275 will lead to fairer salaries and workloads that will help the Libraries retain outstanding librarians who apply their professional, scholarly and disciplinary knowledge in support of the educational mission of the University. I again therefore call for a favorable report to HB 275.

Thank you.