



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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HB 275 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

House Appropriations Committee

February 14, 2023

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 275. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments on granting collective bargaining rights to graduate assistants, part-time faculty, and faculty at the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland.

Maryland law prohibits collective bargaining for faculty, adjuncts (part-time faculty) and graduate assistants. The "meet and confer" process, a university-led compromise in 2012 to stonewall collective bargaining efforts, has failed. The only way for employees to collectively and effectively work with the higher education institutions to improve working conditions is by having the freedom to form and join a union of their choice.

Collective bargaining for faculty (full and part-time) and graduate students is not new. Across the country, thousands of academic employees have formed unions. At least a hundred higher education facilities from Ivy League universities like Yale and Harvard to small private colleges like Goucher have collective bargaining agreements with their faculty and graduate students. The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions found that, "From January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2019 there were a total of 118 newly certified or recognized faculty collective bargaining units in the United States with a total of 36,264 unit members. There were 65 new units at private non-profit institutions, 50 at public colleges and universities, and 3 at private for-profit institutions."

It is time for Maryland to allow faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students to exercise their right to form and join a union.