

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Kate Drabinski, Principal Lecturer, UMBC Gender, Women's, + Sexuality Studies
HB 275
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

I am writing today to urge you to support SB0247/HB0275. I have worked as a lecturer in gender studies for UMBC for 12 years. I work on five year contracts that are expected to be renewed, but I do not have the job security of someone with tenure, or with an enforceable contract. I often have to remind my administrators to renew my contract, and the process by which this happens, or by which I would lose my job, is completely opaque. As a result, I always have one foot out the door, eyes open for other work in case this job falls through. I am encouraged by my colleagues to trust that my job will be here for me, but without an enforceable contract, why would I?

I love my job. I teach hundreds of undergraduate students a year in gender studies courses. I teach students critical thinking, reading, and writing skills that prepare them for any career, and for a life that values service to others. I write dozens of recommendation letters every year for students who go on to study social work, nursing, dentistry, law, public health, research sciences, and more. I am proud of the work I do and the people I serve, and I am proud of what they do with their futures in turn. I would do this work so much better with the clarity of a negotiated contract with clear mechanisms for contract renewal (or non-renewal) and conflict resolution. Collective bargaining rights are good for workers, for students, and for all Marylanders who count on higher education to keep our state moving forward. Please support SB 247 so we can join the vast majority of other state workers for basic job protections.