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**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By the UMD Chapter of AAUP and Fearless Student Employees
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Almost 2,000 people have signed a petition on Action Network telling you to Support the Right to Living Wages and Collective Bargaining for Maryland Higher Ed Workers!. Here is the petition they signed:

We, the undersigned, demand that the Maryland General Assembly, incoming Governor Wes Moore, and the leadership of Maryland State higher education institutions support living wages and the passage of a bill that would give Maryland State higher education workers the right to bargain collectively. As members of the university communities within the state of Maryland, we believe that workers should have a strong and collective voice in decisions that affect our working conditions, salaries, and benefits. Collective bargaining is a fundamental right that allows workers to negotiate fair and equitable contracts with our employers, and it is essential for promoting fairness, respect, and dignity in the workplace. Across the United States, many public and private higher education institutions engage in collective bargaining, including many peer institutions.

Collective bargaining encourages transparency and accountability between workers and management. Without this, the highest levels of State higher education administration have dramatically increased their own ranks and salaries for years while denying living wages and job security to the majority of State higher education employees. USM institutions, for example, currently pay poverty level wages to their undergraduate and graduate student workers and are rapidly replacing traditional full-time faculty positions with low-paid, contingent positions.

Higher education workers serve an important role in the education and research mission of our universities. We deserve to be treated with respect and to have a say in the decisions that affect our lives. We demand that the members of the Maryland General Assembly and the leadership of Maryland higher education secure funding that allows a living wage and support collective bargaining rights for State higher education workers.

You can view each petition signer and the comments they left you below.

Thank you,

UMD AAUP and Fearless Student Employees

1. Liz An (*ZIP code: 17055*)

2. Rose Ying (*ZIP code: 20740*)

3. Lauren Salig (*ZIP code: 20910*)

4. Amanda Visconti (*ZIP code: 22903*)

5. Alex Cheung (*ZIP code: 18938*)

6. Adedolapo Adegbuyi (*ZIP code: 20723*)

7. Anna Aguilar (*ZIP code: LA2 8LP*)
Anna Aguilar

8. Anthony Arias (*ZIP code: 20003*)

9. Amanda VerMeulen (*ZIP code: 20686*)

10. Alptug Aytakin (*ZIP code: 20782*)

11. Ariel Balaban (*ZIP code: 21231*)

12. Abby Canning (*ZIP code: 20005*)

13. Abigail Higgins (*ZIP code: 20011*)
Freelance Journalist

14. Abel Melese (*ZIP code: 20782*)

15. Pedro Henrique Teixeira (*ZIP code: 20781*)

16. Alex Beyer (*ZIP code: 20783*)

17. Amy Gooding (*ZIP code: 21851*)

18. Abhishek Ram (*ZIP code: 02760*)

19. Abigail Vazquez Rosario (*ZIP code: 20744*)

20. Gauge Burnett (*ZIP code: 88001*)

Current grad at New Mexico State University and alumnus of Washington College. Academic workers are critical to the mission of our universities to serve our communities.

21. Abigail Breiseth (*ZIP code: 21201*)

All workers deserve the right to organize and collectively bargain.

22. Abhijit Biswas (*ZIP code: 20740*)

23. Antoine Borrut (*ZIP code: 20781*)

24. **Andrea Brace** (*ZIP code: 21078*)
25. **Arseniy Braslavskiy** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
26. **abuzar bhatti** (*ZIP code: 63005*)
27. **Ariel Brathwaite** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
28. **Alejandro Cañeque** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
29. **Amara Channell Doig** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
30. **Anandi Ehman** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
31. **Niloy Acharjee** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
32. **Arko Chatterjee** (*ZIP code: 20854*)
33. **Alexander James** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
34. **Angela Johnson** (*ZIP code: 20686-3001*)
35. **Cassandra Beaumont** (*ZIP code: 86001*)
36. **Alysa Conway** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
37. **Allison Cooney** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
38. **Anna C Pittenger** (*ZIP code: 21204*)
39. **Andrew Crowley** (*ZIP code: 43209*)
40. **Adam Cullen** (*ZIP code: 20603*)
41. **Addie Mahdavi** (*ZIP code: 11216*)
42. **Aditya Desai** (*ZIP code: 21202*)
43. **Albert Dimont** (*ZIP code: 33433*)
44. **Aditya Sharma** (*ZIP code: 20770*)

45. **Hieu Duong** (*ZIP code: 20816*)
46. **Alexander Dodd** (*ZIP code: 21224*)
47. **Aiden Reilly** (*ZIP code: 94116*)
48. **Andrew Wilkin** (*ZIP code: L8R1J4*)
49. **Ashley Eisenberg** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
50. **Anna Emenheiser** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
51. **Abigail Rogers** (*ZIP code: 21157*)
52. **Andi Sauer** (*ZIP code: 20903*)
53. **Andrea Schuba** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
54. **Sai Etha** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
55. **Alaina Walberg** (*ZIP code: 66044*)
56. **Anna Wenzel** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
57. **Akshaya Ganesh** (*ZIP code: 21704*)
58. **Aritrik Ghosh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
59. **Amin Shiraz Gilani** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
60. **Aryn Schriener** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
61. **Ayona Goswami** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
62. **Alexandra Grimm** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
63. **Alexander Hoyle** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
64. **Amanda Sorensen** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
65. **Aida Roige** (*ZIP code: 20009*)

- 66. Andrew Ross** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 67. Aishwarya Sathya** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 68. Anonnya Islam** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 69. AJ Baca** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
President - Montgomery College AAUP
- 70. Anthony DiBella** (*ZIP code: 02886*)
- 71. Aditi Joshi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 72. Alexandra Kadis** (*ZIP code: 20001*)
- 73. Ahmet Karamustafa** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 74. Omer Akgul** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 75. Andrea Knowles** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 76. Alexander Koch** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 77. Alexandra Krauska** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 78. Ananke Krishnan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 79. Akshaya Ganesh** (*ZIP code: 21704*)
- 80. Ahreum Lee** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 81. Alex Parry** (*ZIP code: 21201*)
- 82. Alexander Dunphy** (*ZIP code: 21230*)
- 83. Alexis Ortega** (*ZIP code: 02903*)
- 84. Alexis Gunderson** (*ZIP code: 20772*)
Solidarity from the Freelance Solidarity Project and National Writers Union!
- 85. Alexander Korsunsky** (*ZIP code: 97302*)

86. **Alex Hastings** (*ZIP code: 20851*)
87. **Gregory Kramida** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
88. **Alice Santana** (*ZIP code: 22314*)
89. **Alireza Moghaddasi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
90. **Ariel Listo** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
91. **Allison Jennings-Roche** (*ZIP code: 21212*)
92. **Alexis Lothian** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
93. **Amy Steiger** (*ZIP code: 20634*)
94. **Ana Lucia DiBella** (*ZIP code: 02818*)
95. **Ahlam Majadly** (*ZIP code: 21703*)
96. **Amanda Bena** (*ZIP code: 21532*)
97. **Allison Bell** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
98. **Allison Buser** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
99. **Amelia Hazen** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
100. **Amelia Gibson** (*ZIP code: 21769*)
101. **Alexandra Melinchok** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
102. **Alaina Green** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
103. **Anna Mikkelsen** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
104. **Amine Chaherli** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
105. **Allison Mitchell** (*ZIP code: 53217*)
106. **Alejandra Montoya** (*ZIP code: 21045*)

107. **Aurelia Moses** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
108. **Amy Wickner** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
109. **Amy Meli** (*ZIP code: 22152*)
110. **Anish Agashe** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
111. **Anahi Espindola** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
112. **Anahi Espindola** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
113. **Anirudh Nakra** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
114. **Andrea Moreno** (*ZIP code: 21202*)
115. **Andrea Gutmann Fuentes** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
116. **Andre Nottingham** (*ZIP code: 20744*)
117. **Andrew Delfino** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
118. **Andrew Young** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
119. **Andrew Cullen** (*ZIP code: 20603*)
120. **Andrew Mendez** (*ZIP code: 21035*)
121. **Ana Ndumu** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
122. **Andrew Freeman** (*ZIP code: 22204*)
123. **Angela Burneko** (*ZIP code: 21223*)
124. **Karen Angeline** (*ZIP code: 04011*)
125. **Alessandro Angelini** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
126. **Angelos Mavrogiannis** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
127. **Anya Trudeau** (*ZIP code: 20781*)

128. Anita Bass (*ZIP code: 21221*)

129. Nick Melczarek (*ZIP code: 21801*)

130. Anny Gaul (*ZIP code: 20018*)

131. Anna Josephson (*ZIP code: 20012*)

132. Anne Rush (*ZIP code: 20895*)

133. Annessa Robbins (*ZIP code: 76182*)

134. Annie Synk (*ZIP code: 20002*)

135. Ann Bracken (*ZIP code: 21044*)

I fully support collective bargaining for all adjuncts, faculty, and grad students. I'd like to see community college faculty and adjuncts included as well.

136. Anne Marie Esposito (*ZIP code: 20743*)

137. Ann Ramirez (*ZIP code: 20724*)

138. Ángela S. Sáenz (*ZIP code: 20782*)

139. Maxwell Anthenelli (*ZIP code: 20705*)

140. Antoine Banks (*ZIP code: 20855*)

141. FNU Anubhav (*ZIP code: 20783*)

142. Anurag Varshney (*ZIP code: 21229*)
Increase wages

143. Aaron Oldenburg (*ZIP code: 21214*)

144. Akintomiwa Opoola (*ZIP code: 20708*)

145. August Miguez (*ZIP code: 20712*)

146. Andra Palchick (*ZIP code: 21201*)

147. Arush Pamulapati (*ZIP code: 20740*)

148. Aashli Pathni (ZIP code: 20782)

149. Alexandria Pecoraro (ZIP code: 21226)

150. Anthony Pellicone (ZIP code: 20912)

151. Anna Phan (ZIP code: 20740)

152. Andrew Stinavage (ZIP code: 20740)

153. Aqila Putri (ZIP code: 20740)

154. Arathi S (ZIP code: 20742)

155. Alia Reza (ZIP code: 20782)

156. Andrew Holter (ZIP code: 60626)
2x UMBC alum; born and raised in Frederick

157. Aria Salyapongse (ZIP code: 53562)

158. Amir Riyahi (ZIP code: 20782)

159. Arjun Pramanik (ZIP code: 20740)

160. Alexander romine (ZIP code: 19072)

161. Aayushi Roy (ZIP code: 20740)

162. Arpith Shanbhag (ZIP code: 20740)

163. Luka Arsenjuk (ZIP code: 20742)
They deserve living wages and bargaining rights.

164. Anu Sangraula (ZIP code: 20740)

165. Rebecca Asch (ZIP code: 22302)

166. Anita Seate (ZIP code: 17349)

167. Alex Sestok (ZIP code: 21230)
I am a postdoctoral researcher at UMB. Though I'm technically a state employee (receiving health insurance benefits from the state), I'm not considered a state employee (not eligible for any bonuses

or COLA).

168. Allison Seyler (*ZIP code: 21214*)

169. Abdul Rehman Shaik (*ZIP code: 20783*)

170. Shereen Ashai (*ZIP code: 21042*)

171. Ashani Jayasekera (*ZIP code: 20855*)

172. Asha Pavuluri (*ZIP code: 20740*)

173. Adelaida Shelley (*ZIP code: 11930*)

174. Alyse Sherrick (*ZIP code: 92780*)

175. Ashley Gunter (*ZIP code: 20019*)

176. Mohana Sesha Sai Ashok Konduru (*ZIP code: 21229*)

177. Asheesh Siddique (*ZIP code: 20815*)

I am a registered voter in Maryland, though I work at the University of Massachusetts, and am signing this petition as a constituent.

178. Asim Ali (*ZIP code: 20878*)

179. Andrew Koch (*ZIP code: 20619*)

180. Lexy Smith (*ZIP code: 21218*)

181. Aiesha Solomon (*ZIP code: 20866*)

Thank you for ask me to sign!

182. Amanda Sorensen (*ZIP code: 20737*)

183. Amanda Sorensen (*ZIP code: 20737*)

184. Amy Swackhamer (*ZIP code: 20906*)

185. Anna Szapiro (*ZIP code: 21218*)

186. Ataberk Donmez (*ZIP code: 20783*)

187. Andrew Goffin (*ZIP code: 20740*)

188. Colm Atkins (*ZIP code: 08901*)

An '07 graduate of Maryland, and a current member of Rutgers AAUP-AFT Local 6323.

189. Andrea Torres Armas (*ZIP code: 20740*)

190. Adam Tucker (*ZIP code: 20011*)

191. Aubrey Tingler (*ZIP code: 20912*)

192. Jonathan Auerbach (*ZIP code: 98281*)

I am an emeritus professor

193. Deborah Auger (*ZIP code: 21014*)

Current University wages for faculty and for teaching/research assistants are horribly low! This harms the University and damages Marylands future... for the future of our state, pass this bill!

194. Antonio Ugues Jr. (*ZIP code: 20619*)

195. Aviah Krupnick (*ZIP code: 20010*)

196. Alvaro Villar (*ZIP code: 207040*)

197. Aviva Mehta (*ZIP code: 20001*)

198. Yasmine Awais (*ZIP code: 21210*)

Notre Dame of Maryland University

199. Alisha Wellington (*ZIP code: 20740*)

200. Ashley Wells (*ZIP code: 20740*)

201. Alan Wierdak (*ZIP code: 20740*)

202. Alexander Wikner (*ZIP code: 20740*)

203. Manli Shu (*ZIP code: 20740*)

204. Stephanie Baker (*ZIP code: 21218*)

205. Joel Miller (*ZIP code: 21222*)

206. Bang An (*ZIP code: 20851*)

207. Adam Yuile (*ZIP code: 61820*)

208. Connor Baumler (*ZIP code: 20740*)

209. Baynard Woods (*ZIP code: 21223*)

210. Brittni Ballard (*ZIP code: 21252*)

211. Britney Bibeault (*ZIP code: 20782*)

212. Bradley Kennedy (*ZIP code: 22079*)

213. Benjamin Cole (*ZIP code: 20740*)

214. Brian Crawford (*ZIP code: 20912*)

215. Brian Davis (*ZIP code: 20991*)

216. Bibiana Koh (*ZIP code: 21801*)

217. Linda Beard (*ZIP code: 80526*)

218. Becky Anthony (*ZIP code: 21801*)

219. Belen Vicens (*ZIP code: 21830*)

I wholeheartedly support this petition. Let's make it happen!

220. Ben Beard (*ZIP code: 80526*)

Graduate students are a critical part of the university workforce and should receive a living wage for the important work they are doing.

221. Ben Flamm (*ZIP code: 20740*)

222. Ben Hord (*ZIP code: 20001*)

223. Betty Yu (*ZIP code: 20904*)

224. Beth Guay (*ZIP code: 20017*)

225. Brandon Harris (*ZIP code: 20740*)

226. Preet Bhela (*ZIP code: 20740*)

227. Ariel Bierbaum (*ZIP code: 20742*)

228. Michael Shull (*ZIP code: 20814*)

229. William Ayers (*ZIP code: 60637*)
University of Illinois at Chicago
University of Chicago

230. Brit Saksvig (*ZIP code: 21032-2109*)

231. Brandon Kolstoe (*ZIP code: 20740*)

232. Ivan Black (*ZIP code: 20874*)

233. Blake Wilder (*ZIP code: 21046*)

234. Alexander Halperin (*ZIP code: 21801*)

235. Zen Jeio (*ZIP code: 20742*)

236. Bethany Letiecq (*ZIP code: 22046*)

237. Behnam Tahmasbi (*ZIP code: 20912*)

238. Barrett Emerick (*ZIP code: 20785*)

239. Baili Park (*ZIP code: 20740*)

240. Blake Munshell (*ZIP code: 20862*)

241. Brittany Starr (*ZIP code: 21212*)

242. Bo He (*ZIP code: 20770*)

243. Rachel Ashmore (*ZIP code: 17363*)

244. Elizabeth Boyd (*ZIP code: 20912*)

245. Ben Bradley (*ZIP code: 20910*)

I am presently a faculty librarian at the University of Maryland, College Park where I previously attended graduate school and worked as a graduate assistant. I am also currently a graduate student

at UMGC. I believe that providing collective bargaining rights to faculty and graduate students will help ensure that the university system lives up to its mission and ideals.

246. Bibek Ramdam (*ZIP code: 20740*)

247. Brandon Cohen (*ZIP code: 21042-3926*)

Former worker and resident physician at University of Maryland medical facilities

248. Brayden Ngo (*ZIP code: 21236*)

249. Brendon Bailey (*ZIP code: 21061*)

250. Bridget Jamison (*ZIP code: 20740*)

251. Brinda Yarlagadda (*ZIP code: 20910*)

252. Brianna Reid (*ZIP code: 20723*)

253. Cody Britson (*ZIP code: 20740*)

254. Bridget Ruiz Rivezzo (*ZIP code: 21231*)

255. Benjamin Henry (*ZIP code: 20814*)

256. Brian Sarginger (*ZIP code: 20781*)

257. Brett Setera (*ZIP code: 20716*)

258. Benjamin Shaw (*ZIP code: 20912*)

259. Brian Shoop (*ZIP code: 20782*)

260. Robert Ortega (*ZIP code: 20002*)

261. Batin Bugday (*ZIP code: 20740*)

262. Byoungchan Jang (*ZIP code: 20001*)

263. Camille Oswald (*ZIP code: 60657*)

264. Sean Robinson (*ZIP code: 20002*)

- 265. Sarah Harper** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
Workers need a living wage.
- 266. Caitlin Christian-Lamb** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 267. Caitlin Kennedy** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 268. Colin M** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 269. Aaron Scriba** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 270. Caroline Maguire** (*ZIP code: 06907*)
- 271. Cassandra Caragine** (*ZIP code: 22202*)
- 272. Livi Carey** (*ZIP code: 21797*)
- 273. Cody Arigo** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 274. Carl Ehrhardt** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
UMD Law '06
- 275. Carlina Green** (*ZIP code: 95112*)
- 276. Carl Goldman** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 277. Carly Brownstein** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 278. Carolina Batista** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 279. Caroline Howser** (*ZIP code: 21120*)
- 280. Carol Leeney** (*ZIP code: 46375*)
- 281. Carolyn Robbins** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 282. Carrie Holt** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 283. Carter Reitman** (*ZIP code: 21230*)
- 284. Catalina Illanes** (*ZIP code: 28109*)

285. Lingjun Zhao (*ZIP code: 20783*)

286. Catherine Fu (*ZIP code: 21228*)

Everyone deserves a living wage and decent benefits.

287. Monica Caudillo (*ZIP code: 20902*)

288. Carter Ball (*ZIP code: 20740*)

289. Cameron Busacca (*ZIP code: 20910*)

290. Cristina Cammarano (*ZIP code: 21801*)

291. Catherine Fowlkes (*ZIP code: 21804*)

292. Crystal Charity (*ZIP code: 20781*)

293. Chen Chen (*ZIP code: 20850*)

294. Catherine Connolly (*ZIP code: 21212*)

295. Carson Coriell (*ZIP code: 20721*)

296. Carla Blackwell (*ZIP code: 21217*)

297. Cara DeCusatis (*ZIP code: 20782*)

298. Chad Frazier (*ZIP code: 66049*)

299. Christian Henrriquez (*ZIP code: 20781*)

300. Charles Dziedzic (*ZIP code: 20740*)

301. Celine Carayon (*ZIP code: 21801*)

302. Sean O'Rourke (*ZIP code: 21224*)

303. Caitlin Blanco (*ZIP code: 20754*)

304. Christina Getrich (*ZIP code: 21043*)

305. Chris Goff (*ZIP code: 20737*)

My son is a first year student in engineering at the University of Maryland at College Park, and I myself am a former graduate employee unionist at the University of Oregon. My union at UO made it possible for me to have a say in my work as well as helped provide for decent pay and health insurance benefits that meant I was able to better focus on my work both as a student and as a graduate instructor. UMD grad employees and faculty deserve a say in their working conditions via collective bargaining, and I am fully confident that allowing academic employees to unionize will only improve the learning conditions for my own son and his peers. Please clear the way for academic workers in the State of Maryland to organize for the purposes of collective bargaining.

306. Chiara Graf (*ZIP code: 20010*)

307. Cassie Gurbisz (*ZIP code: 20636*)

308. Chenchen Handler (*ZIP code: 20017*)

309. Ghansham Chandel (*ZIP code: 20783*)
Let's get this done!

310. Christina Hanhardt (*ZIP code: 20010*)

311. Leela Chantrelle (*ZIP code: 21218*)

312. Charlie Fisher (*ZIP code: 20783*)

313. Ava Serra (*ZIP code: 20722*)

314. caroline heller (*ZIP code: 01060*)

I am adamant in my support of this demand by higher education workers, as I know are many around me.

315. Yajie Chen (*ZIP code: 20770*)

316. Charlotte Herzfeld (*ZIP code: 21211*)

317. Christian Hawkes (*ZIP code: 84116*)

318. Chinyere Osuji (*ZIP code: 20910*)

319. Charles Holden (*ZIP code: 20688-3102*)

320. Charlotte Houghton (*ZIP code: 20017*)

321. Carinna Householder (*ZIP code: 20740*)

322. Kristina Kramida (*ZIP code: 20783*)

323. Christopher Bernard (*ZIP code: 85282*)

324. Chris Zatrutz (*ZIP code: 20874*)

325. Chris Morgan (*ZIP code: 21218*)

326. Chuong Huynh (*ZIP code: 20783*)

327. Cierra Wilson (*ZIP code: 20724*)

328. Christina Ippoliti (*ZIP code: 20740*)

329. Christopher Bonner (*ZIP code: 20010*)

330. C Jenise Williamson (*ZIP code: 20770*)

331. Christian Koot (*ZIP code: 21046*)

332. Christian Sweeney (*ZIP code: 20910*)

I was the first President of UAW Local 2865 -- in the University of California system. I am the Deputy Director of Organizing at the AFL-CIO. And I am a Maryland resident.

333. Claire Landers (*ZIP code: 21209*)

As a MD resident and taxpayer, I believe that employees at Maryland's institutions of higher learning should be repped by a union in negotiating pay and workplace standards.

334. Clara Cuonzo (*ZIP code: 20782*)

335. clea massiani (*ZIP code: 20010*)

336. Camille Levine (*ZIP code: 20740*)

337. Cheryl Hystad (*ZIP code: 21224*)

338. Clare Lyons (*ZIP code: 20902*)

339. Chase Zaslannya (*ZIP code: 20018*)

340. Christine Adams (*ZIP code: 22314*)

341. Christopher McMahon (*ZIP code: 21702*)

- 342. Christopher Murray** (*ZIP code: 19802*)
- 343. Christina Walter** (*ZIP code: 20012*)
- 344. Caroline Myers** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 345. DENISE Whittle** (*ZIP code: 21224*)
- 346. Christina Nikiforidou** (*ZIP code: 20814*)
- 347. Chryl Laird** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 348. Umisha Kc** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 349. Erin Koch** (*ZIP code: 21231*)
- 350. Collin Vincent** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 351. John Carlo Combista** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 352. Connor Lockhart** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 353. Connor Clayton** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 354. Pete Zah** (*ZIP code: 21842*)
Wor-wic Community College
- 355. Konstantinos Pozoukidis** (*ZIP code: 19711*)
- 356. Courtnee Cannon** (*ZIP code: 21231*)
- 357. Clare Parsons** (*ZIP code: 20785*)
- 358. David Fox** (*ZIP code: 08107*)
- 359. Cecilia Rio** (*ZIP code: 21252*)
- 360. Kat Robinson** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 361. Carlos Alvaro Rodriguez** (*ZIP code: 21224*)
All these new buildings and they can't pay fairly???

362. Serena Cronin (ZIP code: 20740)

363. Charlotte Malerich (ZIP code: 22209)

364. Claire Squire (ZIP code: 20782)

365. Caroline Thorne (ZIP code: 20901)

366. Charles Waters (ZIP code: 21227)

367. Caroline Wilkins (ZIP code: 20910)

368. Cavalene Jenise Williamson (ZIP code: 20715)

369. Catalina Moraga (ZIP code: 20010)

370. Chih-Yu Lee (ZIP code: 20740)

371. Yingkang Cao (ZIP code: 20770)

372. Diako Abbasi (ZIP code: 20740)

373. David Agia (ZIP code: 20740)

374. Damien Pfister (ZIP code: 21045)

375. Danielle Aubert (ZIP code: 48207)
Solidarity from Wayne State University (Detroit, MI)

376. Daniel Sidman (ZIP code: 21231)

377. dani hernandez (ZIP code: 20740)

378. Daniel Synk (ZIP code: 27610)

I was a graduate student worker for 8 years, 2 of which were at the University of Maryland, College Park. As such, I am acutely aware that undergraduate education at institutions such as UMCP would be completely untenable without contingent faculty and graduate student workers. If undergraduate education is valued by the university system, then these workers are dramatically undercompensated relative to the value they provide the university. Allowing them to engage in collective bargaining would be an important step toward correcting this inequity.

379. Daniel Blinderman (ZIP code: 48104)

I'm a unionized grad worker at the University of Michigan. All academic workers deserve a union.

380. Daphne Knudsen (ZIP code: 20740)

381. Darby Steinman (ZIP code: 20740)

382. Daria Taubin (ZIP code: 20009)

383. David Sartorius (ZIP code: 20010)

384. David Humphrey (ZIP code: 77019)

385. David Durand (ZIP code: 02906)

I am not in the UMD community, but I have been a graduate student and teaching assistant (Boston University, PhD 2000). (I even won an award for my teaching, though I did not end up as an academic). I know some of the organizers of this effort, and am quite aware of the changes in higher education over the past 20 years, and in light of that, I support their desire to engage in collective bargaining. I am signing in the hopes the my signature is deemed relevant.

386. Erik Davis (ZIP code: 55105)

387. Drew Barker (ZIP code: 20769-9264)

388. David Basena (ZIP code: 20715)

389. Debankur Bhattacharyya (ZIP code: 20740)

390. Danielle Black (ZIP code: 21230)

391. David Boegner (ZIP code: 20740)

392. David Jacobs (ZIP code: 20910)

393. Diana Carrillo (ZIP code: 20874)

394. Dolores Caulley (ZIP code: 20715)

I strongly believe in collective bargaining. I am a member of AFSCME Local 1297 under Maryland Council 3. Collective bargaining allows employers and employees to resolve difficulties at their workplace.

Some difficulties may include safety and health issues, ways to balance work and family, benefits, working hours, pay, and more.

395. David Simon (ZIP code: 20010)

396. Danielle Delp (ZIP code: 20171)

397. Danielle Dirocco (ZIP code: 02882)

398. DinhDuy Vu (ZIP code: 20740)

399. Daniel Ebrahimi (ZIP code: 21228)

400. Deena Shariq (ZIP code: 20852)

401. Clarisa de Leon (ZIP code: 20722)

402. Xavier Delgado (ZIP code: 20906)

403. Delight Agboada (ZIP code: 20783)

404. David Ellsworth (ZIP code: 23225)

405. DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld (ZIP code: 01420)

In solidarity!

406. deNA saleh (ZIP code: 80207)

407. Denise Burroughs (ZIP code: 20165)

408. Desiree Rowe (ZIP code: 21212)

409. Davis Garwood (ZIP code: 20782)

410. Dominique Gebru (ZIP code: 20011)

411. Dana Getka (ZIP code: 20742)

412. David Glenn (ZIP code: 20901)

413. Diana Goldsmith (ZIP code: 21234)

414. Daniel Greene (ZIP code: 20712)

Shared governance currently stops at the budget. To live our shared values, we must be recognized as equal partners in university administration.

415. Kamil Doruk Gur (ZIP code: 20740)

416. David Amdur (ZIP code: 06268)

417. Dhruva Sahrawat (ZIP code: 20740)

418. Dia Sekayi (ZIP code: 21220)

419. Diane Hastings (ZIP code: 20854)

420. Dillon McManus (ZIP code: 21214)

421. Dalton Lackey (ZIP code: 20817)

422. Dejuan Johnson (ZIP code: 20866)

423. Daniel Spencer (ZIP code: 20003)

424. Daniel Tobiansky (ZIP code: 20686)

425. Danielle Leizman (ZIP code: 20781)

426. Debbie Michaels (ZIP code: 21158)

Everybody should have a union, especially the grad assistants that are often exploited via internships and the adjunct faculty who often need to work at multiple colleges and/or universities just to make a living wage.

427. Daija Waugh (ZIP code: 20850)

428. Mydlack Mydlack (ZIP code: 21214)

429. Beth Toias (ZIP code: 20740)

430. Jessica Douglas (ZIP code: 21218)

431. Deena Postol (ZIP code: 20740)

432. Diana Proenza (ZIP code: 20783)

433. Gretchen Rudham (ZIP code: 21206)

434. Kate Drabinski (ZIP code: 21218)

435. Deepthi Raghunandan (ZIP code: 20850)

436. Amanda Deerfield (ZIP code: 21114)

437. Christa Gilliam (*ZIP code: 21218*)

438. Heather Wyatt-Nichol (*ZIP code: 21128*)

439. Daniel Richter (*ZIP code: 20742*)

Daniel Richter

440. Kevin Carr (*ZIP code: 21207*)

I support collective bargaining without fail.

441. David Hanley (*ZIP code: 20737*)

442. David Sicilia (*ZIP code: 20742*)

443. Daniel Sidman (*ZIP code: 10231*)

444. Daniel Smolyak (*ZIP code: 20010*)

445. Douglas Summerlin (*ZIP code: 20910*)

446. Dillon Teal (*ZIP code: 20740*)

447. David Kung (*ZIP code: 20653*)

448. David Todd (*ZIP code: 20910*)

449. Steph Wagner (*ZIP code: 21784*)

450. Nora Dunne (*ZIP code: 21218*)

451. David Waldman (*ZIP code: 20740*)

PLease

452. Dana Watkiss (*ZIP code: 20003*)

453. Xinying Ding (*ZIP code: 20770*)

454. Dongze He (*ZIP code: 20742*)

455. Derya Kulavuz-Onal (*ZIP code: 21801*)

456. Daria Yocco (*ZIP code: 20010*)

457. Daniel Zakzewski (*ZIP code: 22031*)

458. Elise Evans (*ZIP code: 20842*)

459. Elizabeth Hamman (*ZIP code: 20653*)

460. Eamon Goff (*ZIP code: 20737*)

461. Eric Stone (*ZIP code: 21212*)

Workers deserve to be paid and have benefits that represent the extensive, challenging, and important work we do. Supporting us is supporting everyone who engages with higher education.

462. Mairin Barney (*ZIP code: 21214*)

463. Emmanuel Bazan Bergamino (*ZIP code: 20740*)

464. Emma Borzekowski (*ZIP code: 20912*)

465. Ebrahim Seyedebrahimi (*ZIP code: 20740*)

466. Ernesto Calvo (*ZIP code: 20814*)

467. Evelyn Canabal (*ZIP code: 20742*)

468. Charlie Fanning (*ZIP code: 33707*)

469. Emily Chiappe (*ZIP code: 20740*)

470. Nicole Cochran (*ZIP code: 20910*)

471. Ericka Covington (*ZIP code: 21117*)

472. Edward Daschle (*ZIP code: 20740*)

473. Eric Bone (*ZIP code: 21045*)

474. Edward Broadberry (*ZIP code: 20782*)

475. Joseph Hancock (*ZIP code: 90028*)

Graduate of California State University, Los Angeles. Member of the National Writers' Union and the Freelance Solidarity Network.

476. Colin Edner (*ZIP code: 20171*)

- 477. Emily Dobson** (*ZIP code: 20723*)
- 478. Ethan Dudley** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 479. Eran Eads** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 480. Emily Faber** (*ZIP code: 21230*)
- 481. Emily Frazier** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 482. Emeline Fromont** (*ZIP code: 20715*)
- 483. Erin Hill** (*ZIP code: 20777*)
- 484. Eileen Johnson** (*ZIP code: 21801*)
- 485. Eileen Ball** (*ZIP code: 01060*)
- 486. Eiryn Griest Schwartzman** (*ZIP code: 21045*)
- 487. Eric Baker** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 488. Emily Jiang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 489. Emilio Weber** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 490. Erica Hammerstein** (*ZIP code: 20003*)
- 491. Ellia Khan** (*ZIP code: 21227*)
- 492. Elana Blinder** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 493. Emily Mitchell** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 494. Elisabeth Asher** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 495. Elif Osun** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 496. Eliot Fenton** (*ZIP code: 20777*)
- 497. Elisa Gironzetti** (*ZIP code: 20010*)

- 498. Liz Caringola** (*ZIP code: 21701*)
- 499. Elizabeth Irlbacher** (*ZIP code: 22201*)
- 500. Eli Bogat** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 501. Ellen M Benson** (*ZIP code: 06035*)
- 502. Ellen Kohl** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 503. Ellen Platts** (*ZIP code: 02140*)
- 504. Ellen Roche** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 505. Elin Lobel** (*ZIP code: 21212*)
- 506. ernesto longa** (*ZIP code: 87106*)
- 507. Elizabeth Reynolds** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 508. Elsa Lankford** (*ZIP code: 21207*)
- 509. Emily Lyons** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 510. Elyshia Aseltine** (*ZIP code: 21214*)
- 511. Eman Abdelazim** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 512. Eric Masington** (*ZIP code: 21221*)
- 513. Emily Cranford** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 514. Erin Doyle** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 515. Eyda Merediz** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 516. Emilya Ventriglia** (*ZIP code: 21224*)
NIH
- 517. Emily Blakley** (*ZIP code: 13901*)
Binghamton University, SUNY

518. Emily Fox (*ZIP code: 20912*)

Student workers and faculty are employees of the University, therefore it doesn't make sense for them to be excluded from the rights which all other employees have.

519. Eli Mizrachi (*ZIP code: 94577*)

At past Senate Committee hearings I have heard repeatedly that students receive a competitive "effective" pay. The University claims that while we are only paid for 20 hours of work per week, we are "effectively" paid double that if one were to assume we were being paid for 40 hours of work per week.

Yet you cannot pay for 50% of your groceries or rent by claiming that you "theoretically" paid for them in their entirety if the grocer or landlord were to receive two installments--the latter of which is completely imagined.

As a teacher and academic, it is deeply upsetting and embarrassing that an institution of higher education can make such an outrageous claim. If any of my students tried to pass off similar reasoning, they would lose credit not only for being wrong, but for being willfully dishonest.

520. Ellie Kerr (*ZIP code: 20852*)

521. Emma Walker (*ZIP code: 22202*)

522. Eileen Morocho (*ZIP code: 20853*)

523. Erin Myers (*ZIP code: 20002*)

524. irene domingo (*ZIP code: 55104*)

525. Emma Newton (*ZIP code: 20782*)

526. Ethan Ritchey (*ZIP code: 17363*)

527. Elizabeth Williams (*ZIP code: 20686*)

528. Elisa Panciu (*ZIP code: 20782*)

529. Erica Puentes (*ZIP code: 21216*)

530. Eric Burnstein (*ZIP code: 20002*)

531. Erica Blum (*ZIP code: 22202*)

532. Erica Simpkins (*ZIP code: 20695*)

533. Erica Tingler (*ZIP code: 20852*)

- 534. Eric Thiel** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 535. Erin Green** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 536. Elijah Rippeth** (*ZIP code: 22031*)
- 537. Alberto Miras Fernández** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 538. Eric Hartel** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 539. Emma Rys** (*ZIP code: 20640*)
- 540. Erin Sandknop** (*ZIP code: 20019*)
- 541. Emma Selvin** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 542. Emily Shallbetter** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 543. Esther Olonimoyo** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 544. Eric Stull** (*ZIP code: 21234-7618*)
This is way, way, way overdue!
- 545. Elena Tapia** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 546. Emily Dawson** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 547. Ethan Hill** (*ZIP code: 19143*)
- 548. Erin Tinney** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 549. Eric Tomala** (*ZIP code: 20879*)
- 550. Elka Porter** (*ZIP code: 20686*)
- 551. Eva Peskin** (*ZIP code: 07052*)
- 552. eva hageman** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 553. Eva Perry** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 554. Emmanuel Wanjala** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

- 555. Emily Woodie** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 556. Eun-Jeong Han** (*ZIP code: 21826*)
- 557. Emma Yockman** (*ZIP code: 21784*)
- 558. Eric Zakim** (*ZIP code: 20003*)
- 559. Felix Adams** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 560. Faith Spencer** (*ZIP code: 20603*)
- 561. Yihan Fang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 562. Farnaz Zamiri** (*ZIP code: 20817*)
- 563. Fatikha Khasanova** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 564. Francisco Barrenechea** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 565. Farnaz Beygi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 566. Faith Bissen** (*ZIP code: 21157*)
- 567. Paco Brito Nunez** (*ZIP code: 92708-1612*)
- 568. felicia brown** (*ZIP code: 20005*)
- 569. Montana Hoover** (*ZIP code: 21401*)
- 570. Frank Donohue** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 571. Fernando Duran** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 572. Felix Bartsch** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 573. Carlos Fellmann Izurieta y Sea** (*ZIP code: 20016*)
- 574. Frank Fazekas** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 575. Finn Voichick** (*ZIP code: 20783*)

Collective bargaining should be a human right

576. Finn McGhee (*ZIP code: 20740*)

577. Ahsan Nazar (*ZIP code: 20740*)

578. Fariba Islam (*ZIP code: 20740*)

579. Judy Ball (*ZIP code: 01760*)

580. Fredrick Cherry Jr. (*ZIP code: 20783*)

581. Faina Pensy (*ZIP code: 20862*)

582. Frances Raphael-Howell (*ZIP code: 20020*)

583. Frank McBride (*ZIP code: 20912*)

584. Frederick Mills (*ZIP code: 20904*)

The right to collectively bargain is a human right and should not be denied faculty in the State of Maryland.

585. F. Michelle Richardson (*ZIP code: 21216*)

586. Nathaniel Fried (*ZIP code: 20740*)

587. Fernando Rios (*ZIP code: 20910*)

588. Finnley Rocca (*ZIP code: 21014*)

589. Fatima Seck (*ZIP code: 22204*)

590. Corwin Vincent (*ZIP code: 19975*)
Stevenson University

591. Jannah Fusenig (*ZIP code: 20742*)

592. GUGLIELMO RAYMO (*ZIP code: 20782*)

593. Gabrielle Hammer (*ZIP code: 84104*)

594. Gabrielle Tillenburg (*ZIP code: 20910*)

595. Gabriella Messinger (*ZIP code: 21218*)

- 596. Julianna Natali** (*ZIP code: 20874*)
- 597. Sean Gamble** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 598. Spencer Durham** (*ZIP code: 84003*)
- 599. Gannon Sprinkle** (*ZIP code: 15044*)
- 600. Aritrik Ghosh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 601. Anthony Garove** (*ZIP code: 21211-2834*)
- 602. Gaurang Sriramanan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 603. Gayatri Anand** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 604. German De Patricio** (*ZIP code: 21030*)
- 605. Garrett Peters** (*ZIP code: 21036*)
- 606. Alexandra Gelbard** (*ZIP code: 33134*)
- 607. George Slade Jr** (*ZIP code: 22213*)
- 608. Gili Freedman** (*ZIP code: 20686*)
- 609. Gillian Grose** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 610. Gerard Holmes** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 611. Gloria Hu** (*ZIP code: 20905*)
- 612. Grace Hummell** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 613. Guzal Isametdinova** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 614. Glen Kuenzi** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 615. Garth Libhart** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 616. Maalavika Ganesh** (*ZIP code: 21704*)

617. Ethan Gosselin (*ZIP code: 20903*)

618. Gowthami Somepalli (*ZIP code: 20740*)

619. Gerard Passannante (*ZIP code: 20010*)

620. Gabriel pena (*ZIP code: 22046*)

621. Grace Deye (*ZIP code: 20895*)

622. Grace Russell (*ZIP code: 20010*)

623. Grant Clifton (*ZIP code: 93723*)

624. Greta Forbes (*ZIP code: 20740*)

625. Grey Cohen (*ZIP code: 11207*)

626. Griffin Riddler (*ZIP code: 27707*)

Every worker has the right to a living wage, workplace protections, and dignity. Only collective bargaining can ensure this.

627. Garrett Stralnic (*ZIP code: 21211*)

628. Geoffrey Schramm (*ZIP code: 20910*)

I earned my PhD in English at UMCP and left school with a huge amount of debt despite receiving funding for my graduate work. Graduate students, who usually teach the same number of classes as TT faculty, were exploited when I was at Maryland, earning less than the minimum wage for the number of hours we worked. It was exploitative back then, and it is exploitative today!

629. Gabby Trilling (*ZIP code: 20852*)

630. Nicole Guilfoyle (*ZIP code: 20003*)

631. Guyu Sun (*ZIP code: 20740*)

632. Gwendolyn Peyton (*ZIP code: 20740*)

633. Garrett Yocklin (*ZIP code: 20009*)

634. Gyunghee Park (*ZIP code: 10940*)

635. Henry Druschel (*ZIP code: 20017*)

- 636. Harriet Goers** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 637. Hadi Alzayer** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 638. Harrison Agrusa** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 639. Haley Mullen** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 640. Hannah Byrd** (*ZIP code: 20005*)
- 641. Haozhe An** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 642. alison harding** (*ZIP code: 20722*)
- 643. Hariharan Jayashankar** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 644. Harshvardhan Takawale** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 645. Hayden Kramer** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 646. Hester Baer** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
- 647. Holly Brewer** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 648. Hana Zewdie** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 649. Kelly HEBRON** (*ZIP code: 22043*)
- 650. Sandy Herho** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 651. Harrison Bauman** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 652. Henry Hausmann** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 653. Hayley Holloway** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 654. Andy Hines** (*ZIP code: 21210*)
- 655. Lou Hines** (*ZIP code: 11216*)
- 656. Hirbod Akhavantaheri** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

- 657. Hyung Kim** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 658. Hallie Pennington** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 659. Evan Holloway** (*ZIP code: 94110*)
- 660. Sara Honarvar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 661. Harsh Saglani** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 662. Horacio Sierra** (*ZIP code: 20715*)
- 663. Harjot Singh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 664. Shuaiyi Huang** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 665. Hunter Kippen** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 666. Harsha Walvekar** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 667. Huaiyuan Wang** (*ZIP code: 22315*)
- 668. Hanyu Wang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 669. Hongye Zeng** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 670. IA BULL** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 671. Ibukunoluwa Adisa** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 672. Ia Bull** (*ZIP code: 20743*)
- 673. Isabella Alcaniz** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 674. Amanda H** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 675. Innocent Byiringiro** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 676. Vladimir Butyrkin** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 677. Isabella Castillo** (*ZIP code: 20707*)

678. Isabel Fernandez (*ZIP code: 20782*)

679. Isabella Giovannelli (*ZIP code: 20904*)

680. Xiaoshan Yin (*ZIP code: 20740*)

681. Imani Thibou (*ZIP code: 20002*)

682. Imara Crooms (*ZIP code: 20740*)

683. Jared Ball (*ZIP code: 21044*)

Collective bargaining and unionization are human rights issues.

684. Eric Miller (*ZIP code: 21044*)

11th VP, AFGE Local 1923

685. Ines Donfack (*ZIP code: 20850*)

686. Ian Power (*ZIP code: 21230*)

687. Izzy Quintana (*ZIP code: 20854*)

688. Clara Irazabal (*ZIP code: 20740*)

689. Michael Fanning (*ZIP code: 33629*)

690. Iman Sen (*ZIP code: 20018*)

691. Isabel Shaheen O'Malley (*ZIP code: 20740*)

692. MICHAEL ISRAEL (*ZIP code: 20910*)

693. Isabel Torrubia-Gortari (*ZIP code: 20782*)

694. Imani Todd (*ZIP code: 20904*)

695. Kendall Criswell (*ZIP code: 35401*)

696. James Baldassano (*ZIP code: 20910*)

697. Jordan Caraballo (*ZIP code: 21222*)

698. Jacob Prinz (*ZIP code: 21046*)

699. Jade Olson (*ZIP code: 20742*)

700. Jaden Mikoulinskii (*ZIP code: 20740*)

701. Jahnavi Kirkire (*ZIP code: 20742*)

702. John MacIntosh (*ZIP code: 01021*)

703. Joel McQuaid (*ZIP code: 20904*)

704. Jane Behre (*ZIP code: 20912*)

705. Jen J (*ZIP code: 20740*)

706. Janisa Hui (*ZIP code: 20782*)

707. Janith Senanayaka (*ZIP code: 20740*)

708. Janna Soeder (*ZIP code: 20851*)

709. Jose Rosado (*ZIP code: 21015*)

710. Muhammad Jarrar Haider (*ZIP code: 20783*)

711. Stephen Jascourt (*ZIP code: 20832*)

We have been trying for this for many years but the bill almost always gets stuck in committee in one house or the other. This year we need a floor vote in both the Assembly and the Senate, we cannot let the committee chairs continue to bottle it up. It's long overdue. Maryland graduate assistants are all the way at the bottom nationally in compensation for graduate assistants. It is long long past time to fix this and the only way it will actually get fixed is if they can bargain collectively, because the university system has proven over many many years that it is unwilling to deal with the wage gap by itself.

712. Jacqueline Seltzer Bekerman (*ZIP code: 22302*)

713. Julie Silva (*ZIP code: 20910*)

714. Jawayria Rehman (*ZIP code: 21042*)

715. Jessica Bodoso (*ZIP code: 20740*)

716. Jessica Burstrem (ZIP code: 21045)

717. Jacob Bush (ZIP code: 20656)

718. Joshua Buursma (ZIP code: 20910)

719. Julianna Bynoe (ZIP code: 20742)

720. Jonathan Kendrick (ZIP code: 20007)

721. Joshua Clem (ZIP code: 20740)

722. Juan Carlos Quintero-Herencia (ZIP code: 20904)

723. Jonathan Clark (ZIP code: 98115)

724. Jessica Crawford (ZIP code: 22012)

725. Janna Bianchini (ZIP code: 21093)

726. Juan Diego Alvarado (ZIP code: 20740)

727. Jonathan DeBoer (ZIP code: 20782)

728. Justine DeCamillis (ZIP code: 20003)

As a former graduate student and current employee of UMD, I strongly support this petition.

729. Jeana DelRosso (ZIP code: 21043)

Notre Dame of Maryland University

730. Jordan Dewar (ZIP code: 20740)

731. Jacob Giles (ZIP code: 20910)

732. Jessica Diaz (ZIP code: 21228)

733. Jeffrey DiVietro (ZIP code: 21701-4122)

734. John Drabinski (ZIP code: 20737)

735. Jordan Dunklee (ZIP code: 20782)

736. Jen Wachtel (ZIP code: 22202)

737. Jennifer Jeyabal (ZIP code: 20783)

738. Janel Niska (ZIP code: 85282)

I'm a graduate student currently looking for part time work so that I can afford rent and food. Currently, my paycheck is less than my rent and I have been using savings to float. I started grad school with over \$13k in my savings and I am now down to \$3k. Getting a part time job will take focus and time away from working on my degree, but so would the prospect of being homeless and hungry. Graduate students deserve the right to collectively bargain.

739. Jennifer Berkman (ZIP code: 21801)

740. Jennifer Keohane (ZIP code: 20002)

741. Jennifer Romine (ZIP code: 20011)

742. Judith Hallett (ZIP code: 20816)

Hooray!!!!

743. Javier Ramirez (ZIP code: 78741)

744. Javier Reyes (ZIP code: 20740)

745. Jessica Blood (ZIP code: 21703)

746. Jenny Schollaert (ZIP code: 20001)

747. Jesann Gonzalez Cruz (ZIP code: 20743)

748. Jesse Brooks (ZIP code: 20912)

749. Jesse Ginsburg (ZIP code: 10040)

750. Jessica Raskauskas (ZIP code: 20740)

751. Jessica Burnett (ZIP code: 20017)

752. Jesse Parreira (ZIP code: 20740)

753. Jestina Ricci (ZIP code: 20850)

754. Jewel Tomasula (ZIP code: 20740)

I am a City of College Park homeowner and Maryland voter, and I fully support collective bargaining and increased pay for Maryland higher Ed workers!

755. John Keniston (*ZIP code: 20740*)

756. Jair Certorio (*ZIP code: 20740*)

757. Juan Gelvez (*ZIP code: 20740*)

758. james glass (*ZIP code: 20742*)

759. Juana Green-Nicoletta (*ZIP code: 22842*)

760. Jeet Shah (*ZIP code: 20783*)

761. Jerad Hanson (*ZIP code: 20740*)

762. Jessica Harika (*ZIP code: 20781*)

763. Jhayron Steven Pérez Carrasquilla (*ZIP code: 20741*)

764. Joshua Davis (*ZIP code: 20910*)

765. Jonathan Hensley (*ZIP code: 21210*)

766. Joan Mooney (*ZIP code: 20009*)

767. Jamie Hoffmann (*ZIP code: 20906*)

768. John L Hudgins (*ZIP code: 21216*)

769. Jessica Hunsdon (*ZIP code: 08904*)
Rutgers Graduate School of Education Alumni

770. Jianyu Lai (*ZIP code: 20783*)

771. Jiasheng Li (*ZIP code: 20904*)

772. Jiayang Sun (*ZIP code: 20740*)

773. Jigar Mehta (*ZIP code: 20740*)

- 774. Jillian Moore** (*ZIP code: 76001*)
- 775. Jill Stauffer** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 776. Jinchun He** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 777. Jin Choi** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 778. Jeanne-Marie Jackson** (*ZIP code: 21217*)
- 779. John Kim** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 780. Jordan Price** (*ZIP code: 20686-3002*)
- 781. Jacob Martin** (*ZIP code: 20851*)
- 782. Jefferson Kemper** (*ZIP code: 21215*)
- 783. Julia King** (*ZIP code: 20686*)
- 784. Jain Kim** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 785. Julie Koser** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 786. Joseph Lagner** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 787. J Lee** (*ZIP code: 20724*)
- 788. Jie Li** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 789. Justin Lohr** (*ZIP code: 20906*)
- 790. Jennifer Patterson** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 791. Jordan Packett** (*ZIP code: 21223*)
- 792. Joshua Lucker** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 793. Joseph Venosa** (*ZIP code: 21801*)
Long Overdue.....
- 794. janice schmidt** (*ZIP code: 83702*)

795. Jen McGovern (*ZIP code: 20770*)

796. Jared Cooper (*ZIP code: 21218*)

797. Jon Meltzer (*ZIP code: 20782*)

798. Julie Greene (*ZIP code: 20910*)

It's time to ensure fundamental human rights to all UMD workers--that includes the right to collective bargaining.

799. Jonathan Raeder (*ZIP code: 20910*)

800. Julia Myers (*ZIP code: 20003*)

801. Joe Neumann (*ZIP code: 21201-1786*)

802. Maria Joao Lobo Antunes (*ZIP code: 21737*)

803. Joseph O'Leary (*ZIP code: 20740*)

804. Joe Berry (*ZIP code: 94707*)

805. Joseph van der Naald (*ZIP code: 11226*)

806. Joanna Gadsby (*ZIP code: 21211*)

807. Jonas Geiping (*ZIP code: 20740*)

808. Jonathan Sotelo (*ZIP code: 20770*)

809. Jordan Hirsh (*ZIP code: 20740*)

Collective bargaining is the right of all working people!

810. Jordan Aquino (*ZIP code: 20012*)

811. Jordan McNea (*ZIP code: 20782*)

812. Jordan Pierce (*ZIP code: 20740*)

813. Joseph Horgan (*ZIP code: 20895*)

814. Joshua Davis (*ZIP code: 21218*)

815. Jordan Williams (*ZIP code: 19146*)

816. Joy Shen (*ZIP code: 20879*)
PAY US MORE.

817. Joyce Koo (*ZIP code: 20740*)

818. Jessica Perkins (*ZIP code: 47906*)

819. James Perla (*ZIP code: 20001*)

820. JP Fetherston (*ZIP code: 20002*)

821. Justin Frank (*ZIP code: 20740*)

822. June Philip (*ZIP code: 20742*)

823. john pope (*ZIP code: 20011*)

824. Jason Putnam (*ZIP code: 20740*)

825. Joel Rajakumar (*ZIP code: 20740*)

826. Judith Rakowski (*ZIP code: 20737*)

827. John Rendeiro (*ZIP code: 20016*)

828. Jonathan Reyes (*ZIP code: 20904*)

829. Jalon Robinson (*ZIP code: 21239*)

830. Jason Rose (*ZIP code: 21401*)

831. Jessica Rucker (*ZIP code: 20009*)

832. James Santos (*ZIP code: 20002*)

833. Jyana Browne (*ZIP code: 20910*)

834. Jeannie Shen (*ZIP code: 20852*)

835. Carina Jiaxing Shi (*ZIP code: 20018-3301*)

836. John Sivey (ZIP code: 21252)

837. Jane Slattery (ZIP code: 21737)

838. Joel Slotkin (ZIP code: 21286-7613)

839. Jeanette Parker (ZIP code: 21061)

840. Jhayron S Carrasquilla (ZIP code: 20901)

841. Jessica Staggs (ZIP code: 20740)

842. John Sturc (ZIP code: 20007)

843. James Takona (ZIP code: 21117)

844. Jordan Mays (ZIP code: 43211)

845. Joel Tyson (ZIP code: 21223)

846. Juan Uriagereka (ZIP code: 20011)

Every worker should have the inalienable right to choose.

847. Juan Burke (ZIP code: 20784)

848. Julia Pavlick (ZIP code: 20740)

please pay adjuncts more!!!!!!

849. Julia Natoli (ZIP code: 21234)

850. Julia Dawson (ZIP code: 13062)

851. Julieta Ferrera (ZIP code: 20782)

852. Junaid Aftab (ZIP code: 20740)

853. Junshi Han (ZIP code: 20740)

854. Jennifer Wallace (ZIP code: 20785)

855. Joshua Weiner (ZIP code: 20742)

Employees, whether faculty, staff, or graduate students, have the right to collective bargaining. Period.

856. Joshua Westgard (ZIP code: 20740)

857. Janette Corcelius (ZIP code: 22079)

858. Jiawen Zhang (ZIP code: 20770)

859. Jinyi Zhu (ZIP code: 20740)

860. Kiarash Banihashem (ZIP code: 20783)

861. Siti Kaban (ZIP code: 20740)

I really also wish the school can help Grad Student from dropping out because of funding issues.

862. Kwesi Cobbina (ZIP code: 20740)

863. Kaeli Johnson (ZIP code: 76102)

864. Katherine Guardado (ZIP code: 20860)

865. Kevin Hackbarth (ZIP code: 20011)

866. Kajwan Ziaoddini (ZIP code: 20740)

867. Kalin Schultz (ZIP code: 20740)

868. David Kaloustian (ZIP code: 20720)

It is unconstitutional and unfair for laborers in higher education to be denied the right to organize. While living wages is an important part of collective bargaining, there is more at stake here. We need to make the public aware that the erosion of the professoriate is unsustainable and we have long been seeing the deleterious effects of lack of shared governance, threats to tenure and therefore academic freedom, and a disregard for accountability on the part of administrators. Higher education is a public good upon which democracy itself depends and the continuing economic underfunding of state institutions does not bode well for this nation.

869. Kamal Gupta (ZIP code: 20740)

870. Karim Abdallah (ZIP code: 20720)

871. Karla Kubitz (ZIP code: 21234)

872. Karin Roseblatt (ZIP code: 20008)

It's high time. Illinois just had referendum that calls for making collective bargaining a right of all workers. It's shameful that a state like Maryland still prohibits some from joining together and having a collective presence.

873. Katherine Sterner (*ZIP code: 21206*)

874. Kate Dohe (*ZIP code: 20737*)

875. Katherine Cleveland (*ZIP code: 20901*)

876. Katherine Ryner (*ZIP code: 20690*)

877. Kathleen Evans (*ZIP code: 20782*)

878. Katya Leidig (*ZIP code: 20782*)

879. Katya Murillo (*ZIP code: 20910*)

880. linda kauffman (*ZIP code: 20015*)
Emerita English Dept. Faculty and Legacy Donor to UMCP

881. Kavya Rajendran (*ZIP code: 20740*)

882. Kaiyin Li (*ZIP code: 20850*)

883. Kevin Clark (*ZIP code: 20740*)
I support and agree that UMD critical grads are vastly underpaid

884. Kimberly Coles (*ZIP code: 20008*)

885. Kirk Davis (*ZIP code: 21801*)

886. Keagan Dunville (*ZIP code: 47711*)
NTNU

887. Katie Dyson (*ZIP code: 20740*)

888. Keegan Finberg (*ZIP code: 21210*)

889. Keir Hichens (*ZIP code: 98136*)

890. Elliott Kenney (*ZIP code: 20910*)

891. Kent Mattern (*ZIP code: 76706*)

892. Kevin Muhitch (*ZIP code: 21211*)

- 893. Kevin Hayes** (*ZIP code: 20814*)
- 894. Kelli Frangoulis** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 895. Kathleen Gould** (*ZIP code: 21252*)
- 896. Karen Gu** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 897. Kidus G.** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 898. Khalid Saifullah** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 899. Hossein Khayami** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 900. Kevin Hermstein** (*ZIP code: 21042*)
- 901. Khoi Pham** (*ZIP code: 22030*)
- 902. Kristina Howansky** (*ZIP code: 20653-4006*)
- 903. Kiersten Janjigian** (*ZIP code: 20003*)
- 904. Kim Evelyn** (*ZIP code: 20715*)
- 905. Kimia Forghani** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 906. Kinjal Mondal** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 907. Caroline Kipp** (*ZIP code: 20814*)
- 908. Kjerstin Johnson** (*ZIP code: 97214*)
- 909. Kidus Guye** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 910. Kelsey Buckley** (*ZIP code: 60618*)
- 911. Kuan Ling Liu** (*ZIP code: 20705*)
- 912. Katherine Koch** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 913. Kayla Priim** (*ZIP code: 21286*)

914. Kavitha Kasargod-Staub (ZIP code: 20012)

915. Katherine Lieder (ZIP code: 20001)

916. Kelsey Kramer (ZIP code: 77009)

917. Kristjana Maddux (ZIP code: 20782)

918. Sam Klug (ZIP code: 21210)
Loyola University Maryland

919. Katherine Luken Raz (ZIP code: 20910)

920. Kishalay Mahato (ZIP code: 20740)

921. Kathleen McPhaul (ZIP code: 20782)

The principles of collective bargaining strengthen an organization. It may seem restrictive, but the productivity, inclusiveness, transparency and morale benefits to the university as a whole are enormous. Collective bargaining for student workers is consistent with the DEI goals. Otherwise, the DEI strategy is paper-only.

922. Keonwoo Oh (ZIP code: 20740)

923. Collette Kokesh (ZIP code: 20010)

924. Katherine O'Neill (ZIP code: 20742)

Our wages as non-tenure track faculty are not livable. 61% of faculty are non-tenure track.

925. Koren Brigham (ZIP code: 11217)

Our faculty shaped us. Please allow them a living wage.

926. Kathleen Orr (ZIP code: 20754)

927. Koushik Marepally (ZIP code: 20740)

928. Kathryn Pacheco (ZIP code: 20904)

929. Kyle Parker (ZIP code: 21211)

The right to a living wage and the ability to collectively organize for better working conditions is vital to the success of any industry. It is imperative that the restrictions barring this action be lifted at once.

930. Katharine Glanbock (ZIP code: 22201)

931. Alexander Kramida (ZIP code: 20879)

- 932. Kristofer Reed** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 933. Krishna Bista** (*ZIP code: 21236*)
- 934. Kristen Croft** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 935. Karl Krotke-Crandall** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 936. Kellie Robertson** (*ZIP code: 20003*)
- 937. Kevin Shen** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 938. Karl Smith** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 939. Kathryn Thier** (*ZIP code: 20850*)
- 940. Sujith Kumar** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 941. Katherine Wasdin** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 942. Kyle Long** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 943. Kyra Madunich** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 944. Julianne van Meerten** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 945. Paul LaFosse** (*ZIP code: 20852*)
- 946. Larry McNeely** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 947. Ann Larson** (*ZIP code: 94519*)
- 948. Lasair Ni Chochlain** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 949. Holden Zeidman** (*ZIP code: 20877*)
- 950. Laura DeMarco** (*ZIP code: 20853*)
- 951. Laura Castillo** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 952. Laura DeMarco** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

953. Laura Venable (*ZIP code: 21211*)

954. Laurel Hoa (*ZIP code: 20854*)

955. Lauren Eagan (*ZIP code: 20005*)

956. Lauren Campbell (*ZIP code: 20740*)

957. Lydia Becker (*ZIP code: 20740*)

958. Lauren Cain (*ZIP code: 20010*)

959. Lauren Cerand (*ZIP code: 21204*)

Maryland should be setting the standard here, and embracing these democratic practices that enrich the social good.

960. Le Chang (*ZIP code: 20783*)

961. Laura Cleary (*ZIP code: 21228*)

962. Laura Demaria (*ZIP code: 20895*)

963. Lillian Doherty (*ZIP code: 20902-1566*)

964. Lilah Drafts-Johnson (*ZIP code: 20782*)

965. Leah White (*ZIP code: 20850*)

966. Angel Jimenez (*ZIP code: 33604*)

967. Leigh Dunewood (*ZIP code: 43035*)

968. Les Poling (*ZIP code: 20002*)

969. Leo Johnson (*ZIP code: 20781*)

The fact that Maryland State higher education workers are deprived of labor rights available to the vast majority of workers in this country, in other industries (Maryland and elsewhere) and to higher education workers in other states and at private institutions in Maryland, is an embarrassment and a shame.

970. Leo Bauer (*ZIP code: 20740*)

971. Leo Blain (*ZIP code: 20912*)

- 972. Leonard Edwards** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 973. leon covington** (*ZIP code: 21207*)
- 974. Alexis Walston** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
- 975. Lauren Farnell** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 976. Luis Jaramillo** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 977. Liza Gijanto** (*ZIP code: 24503*)
- 978. Linda Gordon** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 979. Aurelia Grierson** (*ZIP code: 97520*)
- 980. Lauryn Hall** (*ZIP code: 20772*)
- 981. Leslie Harrison** (*ZIP code: 21252-0001*)
- 982. Liam Daley** (*ZIP code: 20001*)
- 983. Libby Taylor** (*ZIP code: 21701*)
- 984. Lillian Huang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 985. Lili Kelley** (*ZIP code: 76137*)
- 986. Livingstone Imonitie** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 987. Linda Green** (*ZIP code: 20712*)
- 988. Linda Robinson** (*ZIP code: 20886*)
Montgomery College
- 989. Lindsey Muniak** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
- 990. Lining Wang** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 991. Liu Jiang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 992. Elizabeth Thornberry** (*ZIP code: 21211*)

993. Lizeth Rodriguez (*ZIP code: 20011*)

994. Linda Coleman (*ZIP code: 20706*)

As a tenured faculty member, I am particularly concerned that my colleagues in the professional track faculty are not treated with the respect that their training, expertise and contribution to the university and the state education system deserve, nor are they given the support, in terms of wages, leave time, consideration for conference attendance and participation, etc., that reflect the contributions they are *already* making to the intellectual and educational mission of the university.

995. Lacy MacAuley (*ZIP code: 21716*)

All workers have a right to unionize. All people performing labor have the inalienable right to collective bargaining. Graduate assistants are workers too, and our rights must be protected.

996. Christy Thornton (*ZIP code: 21211*)

997. Adam Lloyd (*ZIP code: 20814*)

Let's finally show the educators of our next generations that they are valuable members of our society, and worth paying us such.

998. Laura Vinti Glaeser (*ZIP code: 20171*)

999. Leo Kerner (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1000. Lucas Railing (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1001. Alessio Lombini (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1002. Lovely Domingo (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1003. Jason Loviglio (*ZIP code: 21209*)

1004. Laura Palarz (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1005. Lucas Butler (*ZIP code: 20008*)

1006. Liam Pocher (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1007. Lydia Quevedo (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1008. Louiqa Raschid (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1009. Leslie Rowland (*ZIP code: 20009-4065*)

1010. Luis Royo Romero (*ZIP code: 20785*)

1011. Lydia Sannella (ZIP code: 21202)

1012. Shufeng Liu (ZIP code: 20740)

Graduate assistants at the University of Maryland are among the lowest paid at any higher-ed institution, after taking into account cost of living

1013. (Laura) Suzannd Gordon (ZIP code: 20912)

1014. Lillian Hsu (ZIP code: 20740)

1015. Lisa Shiota (ZIP code: 20781)

This will make jobs here competitive with federal jobs in the area. Please consider this. Thanks.

1016. Lindsay Inge Carpenter (ZIP code: 20832)

1017. Lucas Howarth (ZIP code: 21044)

1018. Lucy Irvine (ZIP code: 20902)

1019. Luka Arsenjuk (ZIP code: 21211)

1020. Laura Williams (ZIP code: 21043)

1021. Lindsay Yotsukura (ZIP code: 20833-3261)

1022. Lydia Majure (ZIP code: 19147)

1023. Lydon Blood (ZIP code: 21703)

1024. Liangjun You (ZIP code: 21216)

1025. Tiba Shlash (ZIP code: 20817)

1026. Jihyeon Je (ZIP code: 42797)

1027. Azure Zheng (ZIP code: 20740)

1028. Mihai Pop (ZIP code: 20850)

1029. Madison Rolf (ZIP code: 21613)

1030. John Macintosh (ZIP code: 20010)

1031. Madaline DeLuca (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1032. Madiha Moin (*ZIP code: 53092*)

1033. Madison Thurston (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1034. Morgan Adle (*ZIP code: 20705*)

1035. Madyson Russell (*ZIP code: 78704*)

1036. Maggie Nguyen (*ZIP code: 20901*)

1037. Mark Forrester (*ZIP code: 20783-1806*)

1038. Stephanie Gerakines (*ZIP code: 21218*)

1039. Margaret Peterson (*ZIP code: 21401*)

I believe having an opportunity to engage in collective bargaining will be key to addressing issues of diversity and inclusion at our Maryland colleges and universities, and will help us move toward pay equity for faculty and staff.

1040. Mahmoud Abouelmakarem (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1041. Makkie Haller (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1042. Mandy Smith (*ZIP code: 21204*)

1043. tavis mansfield (*ZIP code: 20774*)

1044. Mansoor Johnson (*ZIP code: 21239*)

1045. Morgan Anvari (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1046. Marc Burlina (*ZIP code: 20852*)

1047. Marco Bornstein (*ZIP code: 20007*)

1048. Margot Bloch (*ZIP code: 20912*)

1049. MARINA GOLDGISSER (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1050. Mariom Carvajal (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1051. Madeleine Monson-Rosen (*ZIP code: 21224*)

1052. Marieh Arnett (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1053. Mary Catt (*ZIP code: 14850*)

1054. Mohammad Ashoori (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1055. Masoud Khouzani (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1056. Qihang Li (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1057. Matre Grant (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1058. Matthew Valnes (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1059. Matthew Decker (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1060. Matthew Hood (*ZIP code: 21228*)

1061. Matthew Palus (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1062. Matthew Smith (*ZIP code: 21206*)

1063. Matthew Miller (*ZIP code: 20011*)

1064. Max Auer (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1065. Maura Dwyer (*ZIP code: 21218*)

1066. Maurice Shih (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1067. Mauro Resmini (*ZIP code: 20002*)

1068. Max Erdemandi (*ZIP code: 20009*)

1069. Sara Kamal (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1070. Maxis Jaisi Govida (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1071. Marjorie Ball (*ZIP code: 02886*)

1072. MANUEL BASCOLO (ZIP code: 20816)

Manuel

1073. Michael Becker (ZIP code: 20715)

1074. Molly Bernhard (ZIP code: 20740)

1075. Masa Beslin (ZIP code: 20737)

1076. Mike Budd (ZIP code: 33434)

1077. Malik Callaham (ZIP code: 20640)

1078. Maura Callahan (ZIP code: 21218)

1079. Maud Casey (ZIP code: 20742)

1080. Abigail McEwen (ZIP code: 20002)

1081. Margaret McGhee (ZIP code: 20854)

1082. Monica Cardenas Guzman (ZIP code: 20740)

1083. Alex McKee (ZIP code: 21704)

1084. Min Kim (ZIP code: 61820)

1085. María Cristina Monsalve (ZIP code: 61801)

1086. Michael Long (ZIP code: 7039662846)

1087. Matthew Connell (ZIP code: 20770)

1088. Marycruz Flores (ZIP code: 61801)

1089. Mircea Raianu (ZIP code: 20017)

1090. Milena Crnogorcevic (ZIP code: 20742)

1091. Mary Devadas (ZIP code: 21252)

1092. Marron McConnell (ZIP code: 20815)

- 1093. Josh Medrano** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1094. Megan Cavanaugh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1095. MegAnn Smith** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1096. Margaret Knisley** (*ZIP code: 21136*)
- 1097. Megan Ma** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1098. Mehreen Ismail** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 1099. Molly Ellenberg** (*ZIP code: 20001*)
- 1100. Melanie Rio** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1101. Menika Dirkson** (*ZIP code: 19144*)
- 1102. Junaid Merchant** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 1103. Mercy Brown** (*ZIP code: 68508*)
- 1104. Katie Meyer** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1105. Marios Falaris** (*ZIP code: 21210*)
- 1106. Mohammad Sadegh Foghani** (*ZIP code: 20879*)
Montgomery College
- 1107. Madeleine Boyer** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1108. Mary Hirsch** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 1109. Monika Gross** (*ZIP code: 20769*)
- 1110. Meghan Grosse** (*ZIP code: 21620*)
- 1111. Michael Hanmer** (*ZIP code: 22207*)
- 1112. Md Tanveer Hassan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1113. Mark Helms** (*ZIP code: 20785*)

1114. Mher Kandoyan (*ZIP code: 20009*)

1115. Michael Hinshelwood (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1116. Maggie Lewis (*ZIP code: 21230*)

1117. Monte Hoover (*ZIP code: 20016*)

Please respect the dignity of graduate students by providing living wages.

1118. Lixing Miao (*ZIP code: 60115-3543*)

Workers of Maryland, Unite!

1119. Micah Hurd (*ZIP code: 21215*)

1120. Micaylah Jones (*ZIP code: 20746*)

1121. Michael Hastings (*ZIP code: 20854*)

1122. Michael Mareno (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1123. Michael Votta (*ZIP code: 20010*)

Tenured faculty have always had good jobs, but the trend toward contingent faculty requires re-thinking the model for compensating employees in higher education. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IS ESSENTIAL to continuing the excellence of Maryland's institutions of higher education. Thank you for your consideration.

1124. Michael Rosenberg (*ZIP code: 10023*)

1125. Michael Mason (*ZIP code: 21146*)

1126. Michael McCarty (*ZIP code: 21826*)

1127. Michael Gifford (*ZIP code: 22902*)

All workers deserve full collective bargaining rights!

1128. Michael Lebron (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1129. Michael Parker (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1130. Jong Ho Lee (*ZIP code: 20705*)

1131. Milagros Kuentas (*ZIP code: 20010*)

1132. J Nicole Miller (ZIP code: 20782)

I should not be having to take out student loans as a PhD student with a 50% FTE assistantship just to pay my rent and not starve.

1133. Minghui Liu (ZIP code: 20770)

1134. Miriam Hwang-Carlos (ZIP code: 20910)

1135. Marilyn Iriarte (ZIP code: 21228)

1136. Megu Itoh (ZIP code: 20782)

1137. Michele Jancewski (ZIP code: 17327-9041)

When higher education becomes more interested in making money, rather than student learning... it becomes necessary to have a bargaining unit that would support faculty's efforts to improve student learning

1138. Marcus Johnson (ZIP code: 21224)

1139. Marcus Johnson (ZIP code: 21211)

1140. Micaylah Jones (ZIP code: 20746)

1141. Michael Scire (ZIP code: 21788)

1142. Micheline Wilson (ZIP code: 20740)

1143. Matthew Keeler (ZIP code: 20740)

1144. Mary Gentile (ZIP code: 20903)

Cost of living is astronomical in Maryland and the surrounding area. Livable wage is long overdue.

1145. Matthew Kirschenbaum (ZIP code: 20740)

1146. Jennifer Mendenhall (ZIP code: 20781)

1147. Marina Knittel (ZIP code: 20740)

1148. Madison Shoemaker (ZIP code: 20037)

1149. Manel Lacorte (ZIP code: 20910)

Thank you for doing this for the whole Maryland Higher Ed system.

1150. Margaret Lapinski (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1151. Marisha Leiblum (*ZIP code: 21214*)

1152. Marc LeVan (*ZIP code: 21202*)

1153. MacKenzie Guthrie (*ZIP code: 20706*)

1154. Mengyu Liang (*ZIP code: 20007*)

1155. Michelle Jasczynski, PhD (*ZIP code: 20910-4999*)

Fair labor practices are essential to address the longstanding disparities in graduate student recruitment and retention across the University of Maryland system.

1156. Mekayla May (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1157. Md Musavvir Mahmud (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1158. Michelle Manasse (*ZIP code: 21211*)

1159. Michelle Mazurek (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1160. Mylena Menezes (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1161. Michele Mason (*ZIP code: 20770*)

A university that promotes equity needs to think about all the possible ways to pursue it. This is the moment to make this important commmittment.

1162. Mary McClellan (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1163. Michelle Moncrieffe Foreman (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1164. Michele Schlehofer (*ZIP code: 21804*)

1165. Mine Muezzinoglu (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1166. Madeline Muravchik (*ZIP code: 22314*)

1167. Mallory Haselberger (*ZIP code: 20603*)

1168. Kara Mobley (*ZIP code: 20872*)

1169. Mo Bull (*ZIP code: 20743*)

1170. Mark Levinson (*ZIP code: 98033*)

1171. Mollie Shichman (*ZIP code: 21230*)

1172. Molly Ruhlman (*ZIP code: 21206-4234*)

1173. Monica Apenteng Obiri-Yeboah (*ZIP code: 20784*)

1174. Michele Morgado (*ZIP code: 21403*)

1175. Morgan Dowty (*ZIP code: 21218*)

1176. Morgan Robinson (*ZIP code: 13088*)

1177. Morgan Waite (*ZIP code: 20019*)

Let the workers bargain collectively. I can't think of a reason why this power wouldn't increase quality of higher education.

1178. Erin Mosely (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1179. Mike Heywood (*ZIP code: 20901*)

1180. Margaret Pearson (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1181. M Pease (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1182. Makmiller Pedroso (*ZIP code: 21252-0001*)

1183. Mehl Penrose (*ZIP code: 20742*)

The needs of graduate teaching assistants and professional track/adjunct faculty are not being addressed by the USM. They are paid very low wages and often have obtained extensive training and very high educational levels. Collective bargaining is the only way that they can earn living wages, in a negotiation with upper-level administrators who make very good wages and continually give themselves raises and more staff at the expense of the faculty. It is a shame!

1184. Marco Juarez (*ZIP code: 20781*)

1185. Marc Pound (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1186. Mihirkumar Prajapati (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1187. Malhaar Shah (*ZIP code: 20782*)

- 1188. Michaela Brooks** (*ZIP code: 2001*)
- 1189. Maria Rodriguez** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1190. Michelle Rowley** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
Michelle V. Rowley
- 1191. Michael Rozowski** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1192. M. R. Sauter** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1193. Michael Brennan** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1194. Matthew Simmons** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1195. Margarita Syrocheva** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1196. Mansi Srivastava** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1197. Mia Mann** (*ZIP code: 78723*)
- 1198. Michael Gibson** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1199. Matthew Thomann** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 1200. Matthew Miller** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1201. Matthew Turner** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 1202. Makeda Walelo** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1203. Maria Webster** (*ZIP code: 20636*)
- 1204. Michael Hicks** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1205. Megan Wiessner** (*ZIP code: 21286*)
- 1206. Michael Williams** (*ZIP code: 20754*)
- 1207. Alisa M** (*ZIP code: 21206*)
- 1208. myrna goldenberg** (*ZIP code: 20816*)

- 1209. Natalia Isabel** (*ZIP code: 33434*)
- 1210. Naman Awasthi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1211. Nadia Panni** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1212. Nakul Garg** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1213. Neha Nanajkar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1214. Naomi R Williams** (*ZIP code: 07830*)
- 1215. Narjes Shayesteh** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1216. Natalie Scoggins** (*ZIP code: 21054*)
- 1217. Nate Beard** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 1218. Nate Fuerst** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1219. Nathan McLane** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1220. Natalie McGartland** (*ZIP code: 20784*)
- 1221. Nicole Avallone** (*ZIP code: 20895*)
- 1222. Navaneeth Subramanya** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1223. Navya Gupta** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1224. Nayantara Kurpad** (*ZIP code: 20619*)
- 1225. Nicolas Bolatto** (*ZIP code: 20854*)
- 1226. Nathan Dize** (*ZIP code: 44074*)
- 1227. Neel Jain** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1228. Neal Carter** (*ZIP code: 20850*)
- 1229. Natasha Finnegan** (*ZIP code: 21801*)

- 1230. Neha Kalibhat** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1231. Karina Nelson** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 1232. Raina Newsome** (*ZIP code: 21157*)
- 1233. Nathaniel Grammel** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1234. Nyjel Green** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1235. Nicole Grewling** (*ZIP code: 21620*)
- 1236. Niah Grimes** (*ZIP code: 20601*)
- 1237. Giang Nguyen** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1238. Nicole Hudgins** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1239. Nicholas Hiebert-White** (*ZIP code: 20815*)
- 1240. Hong Nhung Nguyen** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1241. Nichole Thomas** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
Montgomery College
Johns Hopkins University
- 1242. Nicole Carbonaro** (*ZIP code: 21093*)
- 1243. Nicole Dvorak** (*ZIP code: 21043*)
- 1244. Nicole Zimmerman** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1245. Nicole Powlison** (*ZIP code: 22153*)
- 1246. Panagiotis Nikolaidis** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1247. Niko Reed** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1248. Nimarta Chowdhary** (*ZIP code: 21771*)
- 1249. Nina Friedman** (*ZIP code: 20852*)

- 1250. Nika Jurov** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 1251. Nicole King** (*ZIP code: 21223*)
- 1252. Neelesh Vij** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1253. Nicole Major** (*ZIP code: 21702*)
- 1254. Nicole Menkart** (*ZIP code: 20005*)
- 1255. Nancy Mirabal** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 1256. Natalie Trapuzzano** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1257. Nancy Wong** (*ZIP code: 22201*)
- 1258. Noa Saunders** (*ZIP code: 02134*)
- 1259. Nathan O'Brien** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1260. Noel Warford** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1261. Noemi Glaeser** (*ZIP code: 22209*)
- 1262. Nohely Alvarez** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1263. Noriko Okada** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1264. Noor Pratap Singh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1265. Lauren Nowosatka** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1266. Norma Peña Flores** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1267. Nick Pirolli** (*ZIP code: 21771*)
- 1268. Nathaniel Renegar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1269. Natalia Roldan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1270. Natalie Salive** (*ZIP code: 20850*)

1271. Noah Chongsiriwatana (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1272. Nicole Sieck (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1273. Noor Tofailli (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1274. Nikolai Tolstoy (*ZIP code: 20008*)

1275. Nina Versenyi (*ZIP code: 20011*)

1276. Nikita Viswasam (*ZIP code: 21218*)

1277. Noel Warford (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1278. Nicole Wilson (*ZIP code: 21144*)

1279. Nadeem Zaman (*ZIP code: 20634*)

1280. Kwaku Obeng (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1281. Katrina Davies (*ZIP code: 21244*)

1282. Lillian Vincent (*ZIP code: 21222*)

1283. Oliver Gaycken (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1284. Osma Gomez (*ZIP code: 20904*)

1285. Olivia Hodge (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1286. Olivia Rosenberg (*ZIP code: 20002*)

1287. Michael Olmert (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1288. Omar Sabra (*ZIP code: 21704*)

1289. Omar Alsheikh (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1290. Scott Hancock (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1291. Orrin Wang (*ZIP code: 20010*)

- 1292. Pankayaraj Pathmanathan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1293. Patricia Arcellana** (*ZIP code: 20705*)
- 1294. Vincent Paglioni** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1295. Paiheng Xu** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1296. Susannah Paletz** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
- 1297. Joel Pally** (*ZIP code: 21217*)
- 1298. Pasan Dissanayake** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1299. Pascale Fromont** (*ZIP code: 20817*)
- 1300. Connie K** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1301. Purav Patel** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1302. Pat Pat** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 1303. Paul Cote** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1304. Seungyeop Lee** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1305. Paromita Basak** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1306. Patrick Chung** (*ZIP code: 20001*)
- 1307. Pierce Darragh** (*ZIP code: 20855*)
- 1308. Pamela Duffy** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1309. Pedro Henrique Abelin Teixeira** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 1310. Peihong Yu** (*ZIP code: 20850*)
- 1311. Pamela Mann** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 1312. Penina Freedenberg** (*ZIP code: 20853*)

1313. Perla Guerrero (*ZIP code: 20011*)

We should all have the right to collective bargaining because it fosters stronger communities.

1314. Peter Elgee (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1315. Peyman Jabbarzade Ganje (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1316. Patrice Greene (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1317. Peter Grybauskas (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1318. Prakhar Gupta (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1319. Prisma Herrera (*ZIP code: 21223*)

1320. Rigby Philips (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1321. Piper Holly (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1322. Pierce van Mulbregt (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1323. Cheuk Yan Fung (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1324. Allen Bao (*ZIP code: 10573*)

Being compensated fairly for one's labor is a human right.

1325. piper Early (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1326. Peter Glanville (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1327. Philip Johnson (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1328. Paul Landau (*ZIP code: 20002*)

Pro-worker!

1329. Eugenia Lao (*ZIP code: 22206*)

1330. Pallavi Mannava (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1331. Vijay Preetham Meruva (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1332. Phoebe Moh (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1333. Dexter Blackman (*ZIP code: 21236*)

1334. Porter Olsen (*ZIP code: 20832*)

1335. Karyn Pomerantz (*ZIP code: 20740*)

I am a former undergrad and graduate student who also worked for the Physics Department in the 1960s-1980s. I strongly support campus workers demands for higher wages and collective bargaining.

1336. pooja upadhyay (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1337. Haroon Popal (*ZIP code: 19146*)

1338. pam orel (*ZIP code: 21114*)

1339. Patricia Payne (*ZIP code: 08850*)

1340. Prahadeesh Nagaretnam (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1341. PRANAV GOEL (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1342. Prannoy Namala (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1343. Pranshoo Upadhyay (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1344. Patrick Nelson (*ZIP code: 20018*)

I'm a UMCP grad (1991), doctoral student, and part-time adjunct lecturer (PTK).

1345. Pamela Roper Wagner (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1346. Pamela Scott (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1347. Pamela Segal (*ZIP code: 21401*)

1348. Photini Sinnis (*ZIP code: 21201*)

1349. Pam Smith (*ZIP code: 21114*)

1350. Pamela Smith-Purgason (*ZIP code: 21409*)

1351. Patrick Thomas (*ZIP code: 20708*)

- 1352. Ariana Jacob** (*ZIP code: 97217*)
- 1353. Pulkit Kumar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1354. Inesa Susanto** (*ZIP code: 10930*)
- 1355. Vasanth Pidaparthi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1356. Peter Witte** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1357. Quan Shen** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1358. Christine Quach** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 1359. Quynh Phung** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1360. Qianyao Si** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 1361. Kelli O'Dwyer** (*ZIP code: 53143*)
- 1362. Rahma Haji** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 1363. Rahne Alexander** (*ZIP code: 21218-4207*)
- 1364. Rahul Shrestha** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1365. Rain Haworth** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1366. Rajashree Hazarika** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1367. Akarsh Ralhan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1368. Ramsey Karim** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1369. Rana Karimpour** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
Rana Karimpour
- 1370. Randy Ontiveros** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1371. Tianrui Guan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1372. Rayna Arora** (*ZIP code: 20782*)

- 1373. Rakshita Balaji** (*ZIP code: 21045*)
- 1374. Robert Barr** (*ZIP code: 21043*)
- 1375. Robert Burgard** (*ZIP code: 20724*)
- 1376. Rachel Burk** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
Notre Dame of Maryland University
- 1377. Ravi Chepuri** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1378. Reid Doctor** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1379. Ingrid Roselyne Dukundane** (*ZIP code: 14627-0001*)
- 1380. Laura DeMarco** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1381. Rebekah Otto** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1382. Teresa Reese** (*ZIP code: 21250*)
- 1383. Reint Fischer** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 1384. Renae Mitchell** (*ZIP code: 21502*)
- 1385. Richard Engstrom** (*ZIP code: 21146*)
- 1386. Derin Ajayi** (*ZIP code: 21206*)
- 1387. Revati Jadhav** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1388. Rachel Wood** (*ZIP code: 20910-4007*)
- 1389. Richard Reynnells** (*ZIP code: 20707*)
- 1390. Reza Asrar Ghaderloo** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1391. Bob Feldman** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 1392. Rebekah Grafton** (*ZIP code: 20009*)
- 1393. Rhiannon Vaughn** (*ZIP code: 20017*)

1394. Rhosean Asmah (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1395. Brian Richardson (*ZIP code: 20895*)

1396. Richard Prather (*ZIP code: 20912*)

1397. Richard Adle (*ZIP code: 20866*)

1398. Rion Scott (*ZIP code: 21409*)

1399. Rita Jalali (*ZIP code: 20817*)

Resident of MD and parent of alumni.

A University is the first place which should respect the labor of faculty and students and communicate these values to students by supporting fair wages.

1400. Michael ritter (*ZIP code: 20001*)

1401. Rj Coleman (*ZIP code: 20895*)

1402. Richard Bell (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1403. Rachel Hicks (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1404. Rebecca Holden (*ZIP code: 20902*)

1405. Rachel Fomalhaut (*ZIP code: 14850*)

1406. Rui Liu (*ZIP code: 20770*)

Please increase our wage to cover the living costs

1407. Gina DiBella (*ZIP code: 04530*)

1408. Robyn Muncy (*ZIP code: 20902-4756*)

1409. Rachel Whiteheat (*ZIP code: 21211*)

1410. Ritika Namilikonda (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1411. REBECCA NAVARRO (*ZIP code: 20855*)

1412. Robert Fradkin (*ZIP code: 2018 Antwerp, BELGIUM*)

1413. Robin Freeland (*ZIP code: 20639*)

1414. Yichi Zhang (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1415. Paul Romero (*ZIP code: 21214*)

1416. Abigail Vazquez Rosario (*ZIP code: 20744*)

1417. Roseann Saah (*ZIP code: 20906*)

1418. Rosemarie Fettig (*ZIP code: 20782*)

1419. Ruth Anne Phillips (*ZIP code: 20902*)

1420. Richard Pressman (*ZIP code: 78230*)

1421. Rebecca Quon (*ZIP code: 92501*)

1422. Robert Ragsdale (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1423. Robert Rocheteau (*ZIP code: 21045*)

1424. Rachel Steele (*ZIP code: 21801*)

We need better rights and support for graduate students and adjunct faculty.

1425. Rachel Schine (*ZIP code: 20012*)

1426. Rion Scott (*ZIP code: 21409*)

1427. Ruochen Shen (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1428. Rachel Smith (*ZIP code: 21043*)

1429. Rebecca Scherr (*ZIP code: 21209*)

1430. rick stack (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1431. Roger Stritmatter (*ZIP code: 21216*)

1432. Robert Stubblefield (*ZIP code: 20904*)

1433. Ryan Synk (*ZIP code: 21737*)

1434. Rachel Thompson (*ZIP code: 21136*)

- 1435. Robyn Moore** (*ZIP code: 19135*)
- 1436. Rudy Logan** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1437. Sunrin Kim** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1438. Rui Tang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1439. Rupak Sarkar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1440. Ruth Gomez Quezada** (*ZIP code: 20723*)
- 1441. Ryan Sipple** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1442. Ryan Conrath** (*ZIP code: 21601*)
- 1443. Ryan Sporer** (*ZIP code: 21804*)
- 1444. Ryan Ying** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1445. S. Alexa McDorman** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1446. Sam Holley-Kline, PhD** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1447. Daniel Tuke** (*ZIP code: 21224*)
- 1448. Daniel Saalfeld** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1449. SAAD MOHAMMAD Abrar** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1450. Sabrina Taylor** (*ZIP code: 21113*)
- 1451. Sahar Zargarzadeh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1452. Sahar khosravi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1453. Sangida Akter** (*ZIP code: 20740-2018*)
- 1454. Sara Alexander** (*ZIP code: 21234*)
- 1455. Sahara Ali** (*ZIP code: 21228*)

- 1456. Sally Wisner** (*ZIP code: 73160*)
- 1457. Salvatore Pappalardo** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 1458. Samantha Fitzgerald** (*ZIP code: 21201*)
- 1459. Sam Fields** (*ZIP code: 21204*)
- 1460. Sam DiBella** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 1461. Samuel Collins** (*ZIP code: 21093*)
- 1462. Samuel Hickey** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 1463. Sandra Sandoval** (*ZIP code: 22204*)
- 1464. Sandra Gutierrez** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
- 1465. Sanjana Sandhu** (*ZIP code: 20817*)
- 1466. Sankha Guria** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1467. Sarah Berger** (*ZIP code: 21214*)
- 1468. Sarah D'Adamo** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
- 1469. Sarah Rothman** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 1470. Sarah Fouts** (*ZIP code: 21218-4555*)
- 1471. Sarah Loughran** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1472. Marissa Sariol-Clough** (*ZIP code: 20903*)
- 1473. Sashika Fernando** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1474. Sydney Ashton** (*ZIP code: 21230*)
- 1475. Saverio Giovacchini** (*ZIP code: 20712*)
- 1476. Samrad Babae** (*ZIP code: 20782*)

- 1477. Sheila Baber** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1478. Sabrina Baron** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1479. Stephanie Frank** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1480. Shelagh Johnson** (*ZIP code: 21042*)
- 1481. Semassa Boko** (*ZIP code: 92617*)
Solidarity from University of California graduate students
- 1482. Sofia Braddock** (*ZIP code: 21043*)
- 1483. Sebastian Bronson Boddie** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1484. Bhargava Teja Sallapalli** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1485. Sarah Cameron** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1486. Stephanie Cavanaugh** (*ZIP code: 20716*)
- 1487. Shih-Huai Cheng** (*ZIP code: 20743*)
- 1488. Stefan Cieply** (*ZIP code: 48237*)
- 1489. Clarissa Salazar** (*ZIP code: 21202*)
- 1490. Shanchuan Liang** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 1491. Sean Cooney** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
Montgomery College
- 1492. Scott Trudell** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1493. Heidi Scott** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1494. Grant Golden** (*ZIP code: 53143*)
- 1495. Sabrina Curtis** (*ZIP code: 20903*)
- 1496. Subhadeep Das** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

- 1497. Sylvia Dash** (*ZIP code: 20720*)
- 1498. Simone DeSouza** (*ZIP code: 20724*)
- 1499. Sanket Doshi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1500. Syjane Eang** (*ZIP code: 22102*)
- 1501. Sebastian Suarez** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1502. Segev Elazar Mittelman** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 1503. Sarah Latchney** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 1504. Samantha O'Connor** (*ZIP code: 46616*)
- 1505. Sepehr Mohammadkhani** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1506. Seth Silberman** (*ZIP code: 11210*)
- 1507. Seth Forrest** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 1508. Samuel Freed** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1509. Sarah Gilchrist** (*ZIP code: 21218*)
- 1510. Sharath Girish** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1511. Shabab Mirza** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1512. Shahrzad Ateffi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1513. Seyedeh pardis Hajiseyedrazi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1514. Seth Hammer** (*ZIP code: 21212*)
- 1515. Shannon Neal** (*ZIP code: 20785*)
- 1516. Sharon Clarke** (*ZIP code: 32713*)
- 1517. Shaunda Vasudev** (*ZIP code: 20902*)

- 1518. Shayna Shor** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1519. Susan Edgerton** (*ZIP code: 05350*)
- 1520. Shavonne Hedgepeth** (*ZIP code: 20706*)
- 1521. Sarita Heer** (*ZIP code: 60625*)
- 1522. Shen Pan** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1523. Sophie Hess** (*ZIP code: 21218-4431*)
- 1524. chris barousse** (*ZIP code: 48197*)
- 1525. Shireen Jarrar-Ahmido** (*ZIP code: 20871*)
- .
- 1526. Sam Besse** (*ZIP code: 21227*)
- 1527. Shon Kaganovich** (*ZIP code: 20854*)
- 1528. Matthew Brown** (*ZIP code: 20772*)
- 1529. Sarah Hovde** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 1530. Michael Shuster** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1531. Sel Hwahng** (*ZIP code: 21252*)
- 1532. Siddhant Pillai** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1533. Mary C Sies** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1534. Ria Yang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1535. Anmol Sikka** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1536. Faith Taylor** (*ZIP code: 21044*)
- 1537. Simone DeSouza** (*ZIP code: 20724*)
- 1538. Akanksha Singh** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

- 1539. Eduardo Siqueira** (*ZIP code: 02130*)
- 1540. Stephanie Hong** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1541. Shuo Huang** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1542. Stanley Kemp** (*ZIP code: 21201*)
- 1543. Sarah Kistner** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 1544. Steven Klees** (*ZIP code: 20901*)
It's about time!
- 1545. Sophia Levy** (*ZIP code: 20724*)
- 1546. Sanjaya Herath** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1547. Siv Lie** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1548. Scott Thornton** (*ZIP code: 02148*)
- 1549. Samantha Topka** (*ZIP code: 19380*)
- 1550. Sazan Mahbub** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 1551. Sara Mascone** (*ZIP code: 20904*)
- 1552. Shrestha Mathur** (*ZIP code: 20903*)
- 1553. Sophie Domanski** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 1554. Scott Mirabile** (*ZIP code: 20653*)
- 1555. Jacquelyn Smith** (*ZIP code: 20737*)
- 1556. Shoumik Saha** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1557. Scott Monnin** (*ZIP code: 20008*)
- 1558. Smrithan Ravichandran** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1559. Sarah Surak** (*ZIP code: 21801*)

- 1560. Snehesh Shrestha** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1561. Sunyup Park** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1562. Samantha Snyder** (*ZIP code: 21045*)
- 1563. Sohini Dutt** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1564. Shuubham Ojha** (*ZIP code: 70821*)
- 1565. Sofia Olivar** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1566. Solomon Comissiong** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1567. Soma Roy** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1568. Hyeonjin Song** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1569. Sophie Hoyt** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1570. Saul Sosnowski** (*ZIP code: 20852*)
- 1571. Spyridon Lentas** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1572. Stephen O'Connell** (*ZIP code: H91 XHH5*)
- 1573. Shartoya Jn.Baptiste** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1574. Srinidhi Hegde** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1575. Srijal Shekhar Poojari** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1576. Sonica Sayam** (*ZIP code: 20166*)
- 1577. Alessia S** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1578. Sarah Silberman** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1579. Shashank Sule** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1580. Stephanie Sabourin** (*ZIP code: 21046*)

- 1581. Stephen Synk** (*ZIP code: 27610*)
- 1582. Sheneese Thompson** (*ZIP code: 19138*)
- 1583. Patrick Davis** (*ZIP code: 35405*)
- 1584. Eli Straussman** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1585. Rachel Rice** (*ZIP code: 21704*)
- 1586. Stuart Schrader** (*ZIP code: 21211*)
- 1587. Suhana Chattopadhyay** (*ZIP code: 22191*)
- 1588. Sunkyu Park** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1589. Sun Lee** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1590. Sureshee Liyanaarachchi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1591. Sururah Abdulrazaq** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1592. Yongcheng Cao** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1593. Sonia Vargas** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1594. Stefano Villani** (*ZIP code: 20817*)
- 1595. Chaitanya Nevewani** (*ZIP code: 21227*)
- 1596. Sidney Walker** (*ZIP code: 20706*)
- 1597. Swarup Subudhi** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1598. Swati Sah** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1599. Samantha Wismer** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1600. Jamie Cohen-Cole** (*ZIP code: 22206*)
- 1601. SunJung Yoon** (*ZIP code: 20009*)

- 1602. Stephanie Chia** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1603. Sydney Hancock** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1604. Sydney Triola** (*ZIP code: 20814*)
- 1605. Sydney Overton** (*ZIP code: 20878*)
- 1606. Sylvia Jacobson** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1607. John Synk** (*ZIP code: 21737*)
- 1608. Shengzhuo Yuan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1609. Yvette Tamukong** (*ZIP code: 21060*)
- 1610. Tiana Hawkins** (*ZIP code: 20735*)
- 1611. Julie Taddeo** (*ZIP code: 20912*)
- 1612. Taehyun Kim** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1613. Tahirah Akbar-Williams** (*ZIP code: 20746*)
- 1614. Taiwo Alawode** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1615. Tamara Allard** (*ZIP code: 21044*)
- 1616. Tanya Olson** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 1617. Tanya Agathocleous** (*ZIP code: 11215*)
- 1618. Tao Tao** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1619. Tara Sohrabi** (*ZIP code: 20906*)
Montgomery College
- 1620. Tara Johnston** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1621. Tara Michael** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1622. Md tarikul Islam** (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1623. Natasha Williams (*ZIP code: 60626*)

1624. Tamara Bhalla (*ZIP code: 21250*)

1625. Theodore Leinwand (*ZIP code: 20037*)

1626. Tita Chico (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1627. Thomas Hilde (*ZIP code: 20912*)

1628. Tyler Clark (*ZIP code: 20010*)

1629. Tracey DiRusso (*ZIP code: 21830*)

1630. Tim Reedy (*ZIP code: 20878*)

1631. Teagan Murphy (*ZIP code: 20814*)

1632. Timothy Stock (*ZIP code: 21801*)

1633. Thiana Fitzhugh (*ZIP code: 20714*)

1634. Timothy Gibson (*ZIP code: 22206*)

1635. Tracee Matthias (*ZIP code: 20901*)

1636. Tom Hatcher (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1637. Thayse Leal lima (*ZIP code: 20011*)

1638. David Verne Sowards (*ZIP code: 20855*)

Montgomery College has a great union and a great contract.

1639. Michael Baptiste (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1640. Carol Flanagan (*ZIP code: 20705*)

1641. Samyadeep Basu (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1642. Eric Thiel (*ZIP code: 20010*)

1643. Thorin Erb (*ZIP code: 20912*)

1644. Pei-Hsuan Lin (ZIP code: 20708)

1645. Tiana Reid (ZIP code: M6C 4B4)

1646. chen tian (ZIP code: 20740)

1647. Tifanee McCaskill (ZIP code: 20740)

If we are expected to produce our best scholarship and add value to our university, we should not be burdened with the mental labor of figuring out how we are going to eat and pay our bills.

1648. Tiffiney Davis (ZIP code: 35406)

1649. Timothy Kelly (ZIP code: 20740)

1650. Timmy Bridgeman (ZIP code: 39157)

1651. Timothy Hicks (ZIP code: 20901)

1652. TIN Nguyen (ZIP code: 20740)

1653. Andrea Brown (ZIP code: 20740)

1654. Turner Pepper (ZIP code: 20770)

I'm officially paid for 20 hours of work but I'd get fired if I stopped there. If my stipend were an hourly rate, it wouldn't even hit minimum wage.

1655. Tyle Pike (ZIP code: 20001)

1656. Tina Kelleher (ZIP code: 21218)

1657. Taylor Lewis (ZIP code: 20707)

1658. Temptaous Mckoy (ZIP code: 21060)

1659. Theresa Menna (ZIP code: 20740)

1660. Thomas Palmer (ZIP code: 21234)

1661. Thao Tran (ZIP code: 22003)

1662. Mireia Toda Cosi (ZIP code: 20740)

1663. Todd Reynolds (ZIP code: 21215)

1664. Todd Eberly (*ZIP code: 20619*)

1665. Thomas Zeller (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1666. Tommaso Penati (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1667. Dionysus Warkins (*ZIP code: 80027*)

1668. Tracy Berger (*ZIP code: 80027*)

1669. Travis Kinder (*ZIP code: 20850*)

1670. Trevor Hennebery (*ZIP code: 07830*)

This is so fucking obviously necessary and right. You are scum if you think otherwise and you deserve the worst in this world.

1671. Nishchal Tripathi (*ZIP code: 20782*)

I fully support the bill

1672. Thomas Roche (*ZIP code: 21769*)

1673. Giorgos Tsimos (*ZIP code: 06515*)

1674. Efstratios Tsoukanis (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1675. Talia Solomon (*ZIP code: 20010*)

1676. Tetiana Tytko (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1677. Tri Vu Phu (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1678. Thomas Wong (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1679. Gena Robbins (*ZIP code: 98033*)

1680. Tom Goyens (*ZIP code: 21601*)

1681. Tykee James (*ZIP code: 20011*)

1682. Utkarsh Chhadva (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1683. Robin Udell (*ZIP code: 20902*)

1684. Upasana Kaku (*ZIP code: 20910*)

1685. Stella Agogbuo (*ZIP code: 20774*)

Adding my voice with colleagues. Dr. Stella Agogbuo.

1686. UMD AAUP (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1687. Brice Bowrey (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1688. Ushashi Podder (*ZIP code: 20740*)

The stipend is too low to be able to sustain at College Park. It will of great help if we get a raise. Thanks.

1689. Vincenza Perla (*ZIP code: 2074"*)

1690. Valentina Rosales (*ZIP code: 20002*)

1691. Victoire Alleluia Shenge (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1692. Valerie Anishchenkova (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1693. Marie van Staveren (*ZIP code: 21211*)

1694. Kapil Vasudev (*ZIP code: 20902*)

1695. Vatsal Agarwal (*ZIP code: 01886*)

1696. Varun Chari (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1697. Vanessa Vaile (*ZIP code: 80759*)

1698. Venkata Sai Sree Guttula (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1699. Veronica Sousa (*ZIP code: 21211*)

1700. Veronica Milliner (*ZIP code: 22301*)

1701. Vanessa Frias-Martinez (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1702. Virginia Haufler (*ZIP code: 20901*)

1703. Victor Hernandez (*ZIP code: 22303*)

1704. Victoria Ifatusin (*ZIP code: 20901*)

1705. Victor Irekponor (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1706. Virginia Byrne (*ZIP code: 21224*)

1707. Marianne F Moore (*ZIP code: 21113-2999*)

1708. Vishavdeep Vashisht (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1709. Vishavdeep Vashisht (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1710. Robert Birt (*ZIP code: 21239*)

It is simple justice. It ought not even be an issue. The right to a living wage and collective bargaining can not be controversial in a society which regards itself as a democracy committed to human dignity and human right

1711. Victor Perez (*ZIP code: 20657*)

1712. Veronica Lucchese (*ZIP code: 21403*)
UMCES

1713. Alicia Volk (*ZIP code: 20742-1335*)

1714. Viktoriia Savchuk (*ZIP code: 20018*)

1715. Vasu Singla (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1716. Victoria Wolf (*ZIP code: 21853*)

1717. Victoria Worley (*ZIP code: 20017*)

1718. Veronica Vaisman (*ZIP code: 20723*)

1719. Vessela Valiavitcharska (*ZIP code: 20742*)

1720. Victoria Van Hying (*ZIP code: 21044*)

1721. Vinay Vikramaditya (*ZIP code: 20783*)

1722. Vanessa Hilchey (*ZIP code: 21250*)

1723. William Loeffler (*ZIP code: 21758*)

1724. Hwei Wang (ZIP code: 21804)

1725. Day Leone (ZIP code: 21921)

1726. Walid Ouaret (ZIP code: 20740)

1727. Mychala Walker (ZIP code: 20910)

1728. Shiyi Wang (ZIP code: 20770)

1729. Barry Nelson (ZIP code: 21044)

Son is communications professor at UMD Needs better pay

1730. Carol Nelson (ZIP code: 21044)

Parent of Staff member

1731. Wenyu Ye (ZIP code: 20770)

1732. Wenjing Gao (ZIP code: 20878)

1733. William Grunow (ZIP code: 20782)

There is currently no way for us to negotiate anything at all. All decisions that affect our employment conditions are entirely made by the administration with no requirement to listen to grad students whatsoever. This is not a "free-market" decision as many of us are legally not allowed to work elsewhere.

1734. Wentao Guo (ZIP code: 20740)

1735. Wanda Hernandez (ZIP code: 22302)

1736. Beth Peterson (ZIP code: 20901)

1737. Woohyeon Kim (ZIP code: 20781)

1738. Katherine Head (ZIP code: 20833)

1739. Debbie Bright (ZIP code: 21250)

1740. William Herbert (ZIP code: 12054)

1741. Matthew Wilson (ZIP code: 20001)

1742. Kate Wilson (ZIP code: 21701)

1743. Witold Skwierczynski (*ZIP code: 21228*)

1744. William Lennon (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1745. Todd Wolfson (*ZIP code: 19148*)

1746. Woody Woodruff (*ZIP code: 20706*)

This fight has been going on during (and before) my two stints as a grad student 1985-90 and 2008-14. It's time justice was served.

1747. colleen woods (*ZIP code: 21218*)

1748. James Walker (*ZIP code: 21217*)

1749. Whitney Johnson (*ZIP code: 21009*)

1750. Zhiyi Wu (*ZIP code: 21043*)

1751. Xuejing Wang (*ZIP code: 10036*)

1752. Suhas Gotla (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1753. Alexandra Wood (*ZIP code: 20772*)

1754. Xinying Ding (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1755. Michael Goodman (*ZIP code: 53704-3974*)

1756. Xiaohui Yu (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1757. Xingman Wu (*ZIP code: 20770*)

1758. Xantha McFarland (*ZIP code: 35405*)

1759. Xinyi Situ (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1760. Xin Xu (*ZIP code: 22202*)

1761. Xiao Xiao (*ZIP code: 20740*)

1762. Yajie Xiong (*ZIP code: 20783*)

- 1763. Xiaoyan Zhao** (*ZIP code: 95054*)
- 1764. Xiaoyan Zhao** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1765. FNU Govind** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1766. Maxwell Yamane** (*ZIP code: 20903*)
- 1767. Yang Bai** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1768. Jinghong Yang** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1769. Yang Bai** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1770. Yulong Dong** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1771. Yudong Li** (*ZIP code: 20741*)
- 1772. Yuan Gao** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1773. Haochen Yang** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1774. Yu-Chi Hou** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1775. Yianni Karabatis** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1776. Will Zhu** (*ZIP code: 20817*)
- 1777. Yiran Xu** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1778. Yikuan Ji** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1779. Youngsun Lee** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1780. Yuanpeng Yuanpeng Hou** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1781. Yash Raizada** (*ZIP code: 20783*)
- 1782. Leo Sun** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1783. Youssef Tewala** (*ZIP code: 30030*)

- 1784. Yanelyn Perez** (*ZIP code: 20010*)
- 1785. Boning Yu** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1786. Yuelin Liu** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1787. Sarah Wang** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
- 1788. Yuzhu Mao** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1789. Yvonne Slosarski** (*ZIP code: 20017*)
- 1790. Yixin Wang** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1791. Xiaofeng Ye** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1792. Yue Xin** (*ZIP code: 20910*)
- 1793. Ada Zheng** (*ZIP code: 95054*)
- 1794. Zothan Mawii** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1795. Zachary Maher** (*ZIP code: 20782*)
- 1796. Zachary Kiedrowski** (*ZIP code: 21084*)
- 1797. Zach Wandalowski** (*ZIP code: 21702*)
- 1798. Zaquane Dozier** (*ZIP code: 21009*)
- 1799. Zara Freeland** (*ZIP code: 20744*)
- 1800. Zihan Chne** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1801. Zoey Kearns** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 1802. Zaida Diaz** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1803. Zachary Dorner** (*ZIP code: 20781*)
- 1804. Zelin Lu** (*ZIP code: 20770*)

- 1805. Zeporia Smith** (*ZIP code: 20902*)
Montgomery College
- 1806. Zeyu Yan** (*ZIP code: 20895*)
- 1807. Zeke Gonzalez** (*ZIP code: 20011*)
- 1808. Yunpeng Zhao** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1809. Zhi Heng Liu** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1810. Siyi Zhu** (*ZIP code: 20770*)
- 1811. Ziad Bentahar** (*ZIP code: 21286*)
- 1812. Zoe Kushubar** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1813. Zlatko-Salko Lagumdzija** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1814. Zhenle Duan** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1815. Ziliang Ma** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1816. Zachary Metzler** (*ZIP code: 21230*)
- 1817. Zining Zhang** (*ZIP code: 20742*)
- 1818. Sha Zee** (*ZIP code: 10013*)
- 1819. Shuhao Zhang** (*ZIP code: 20002*)
- 1820. Zoe Singleton** (*ZIP code: 20740*)
- 1821. Zexuan Zhao** (*ZIP code: 20740*)

abhijit.biswas.pdf

Uploaded by: Abhijit Biswas

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Abhijit Biswas, Research Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

it can help me to live in standard living conditions. The living cost in College Park is very high, and recently it has again increased significantly. Last week the UMD conducted a Graduate Student Housing Survey where they offered one private room in a Two-Bedroom / Two-Bathroom apartment with an estimated rent of \$1,270 - \$1,325 /month /person, which excludes utilities such as cable, natural gas, and electricity. This rent is more than half of my after-tax salary. Now, if I consider this housing, I will not have much for any recreational and self-care activity after spending on food, clothes, and transportation. I live alone and sometimes find it challenging to lead a standard life here. I cannot imagine the condition of others who live with spouses and children. This is high time these concerns should be addressed appropriately.

This bill will work as an effective means to address many valid concerns of the GAs, including unlivable wages, unregulated hours, and mental health concerns. The GAs must formally negotiate with the university to address these concerns with collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,
Abhijit Biswas
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8223 Paint Branch Dr, College Park, MD 20742, College Park, MD 20740
abiswas3@umd.edu

SB247 - FIN - FAV - ASchneider.pdf

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Position: FAV

SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 247

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

FINANCE COMMITTEE

February 16, 2023

Thank you, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee, for your serious consideration of SB247, which would extend collective bargaining rights to faculty and graduate assistants at institutions within the University of System of Maryland (USM), Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland. My name is Adam Schneider, and as a former adjunct faculty member within the USM, and in solidarity with and **in support of adjunct faculty and graduate assistants, whose work is essential to the core teaching and research functions of our public universities, I offer this testimony in strong support of SB247.**

SB247 responds to changes in the workforce and higher education, which increasingly rely on so-called “contingent” workers. Such workers make up a larger and larger percentage of the U.S. economy. In the years following the Great Recession the U.S. Government Accountability Office [GOA] estimated that 40% of the U.S. workforce was contingent.¹ A significant – and often overlooked – sector that has seen a dramatic increase in the size of its contingent workforce is academia. “In 1969, almost 80 percent of college faculty members were tenured or tenure-track. Today, the numbers have essentially flipped, with two-thirds of faculty now non-tenured and half of those working only part-time, often with several different teaching jobs.”² In fact, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics finds that almost one-third of contingent workers are within education and health services industry.³ According to the GAO, “These contingent workers are also more likely than standard workers to experience job instability, and to be less satisfied with their benefits and employment arrangements than standard full-time workers. Because contingent work can be unstable or may afford fewer worker protections depending on a worker’s particular employment arrangement, it tends to lead to lower earnings, fewer benefits, and a greater reliance on public assistance than standard work.”⁴

Many adjunct faculty members struggle to make ends meet. The American Community Survey found that nearly one-third of part-time faculty live near or below the federal poverty line, and the UC Berkeley Labor Center found that a quarter of families of part-time faculty are enrolled in at least one public assistance program like food stamps and Medicaid, or qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit.⁵ The Chronicle of Higher Education found “a large portion of universities and

¹ U.S. Government Accountability Office. (April 20, 2015). Contingent workforce: size, characteristics, earnings, and benefits. Available at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/670/669899.pdf>.

² Frederickson, C. (Sept 15, 2015). There is no excuse for how universities treat adjuncts. *The Atlantic*. Available at <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/09/higher-education-college-adjunct-professor-salary/404461/>.

³ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (May 2017). Industry of contingent and noncontingent workers, percentage distribution. Available at <https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2018/contingent-workers/home.htm>.

⁴ U.S. Government Accountability Office. (April 20, 2015).

⁵ Frederickson, C. (Sept 15, 2015).

colleges limit their adjuncts' hours to avoid having to provide health insurance now required for full-timers under the Affordable Care Act.”⁶

SB247 is a response to the failures of current policies and procedures. In their previous statements on this issue, university administrators have praised the “meet and confer” process, which is available to graduate assistants – but not to adjunct faculty. While this process may meet the goals of university leadership, the evidence that it has failed to meet the needs of many graduate assistants is clear, for nearly 200 graduate assistants submitted testimony seeking the right to collectively bargain last year. If graduate students and adjunct faculty members feel that their needs are being heard and met by university leaders, there would be little reason for them to organize to actualize their right to collectively bargain. **SB247 not only provides graduate assistants and adjunct faculty the ability to sit across the table and speak with university administrators; it will encourage these administrators to listen and respond to their needs.**

SB247 advances a vision of our public universities as a system that “fully embraces diversity, equity and inclusion as morally right and educationally sound, and that centers the wellbeing of individuals and communities” – which is entirely consistent with, and in fact is identical to, the stated vision of the University of Maryland.⁷ Opposition by the USM and its institutions is inconsistent with the visions and culture to which they are ostensibly dedicated. The USM proclaims that it and “its institutions are dedicated to celebrating, supporting, upholding, protecting, and enhancing diversity and inclusion ... [and will] evaluate whether we treat our own people right, fairly, with equitable opportunity.”⁸ SB247 will diversify voices that are heard, and will help ensure that graduate students and adjunct faculty are treated fairly and equitably. Towson University states it “is a national leader in inclusive excellence.”⁹ SB247 will help ensure that graduate assistants and adjunct faculty at Towson University and other USM institutions are included in the decisions that impact them. Leadership on campuses across the USM rightly have encouraged and supported the creation of spaces where people can come together around certain aspects of their social identities to share their experiences and needs. **It's regretful if the USM or its institutions oppose people coming together around their experiences and needs as workers.**

With SB247, USM and its institutions will join many other universities both locally and nationally to extend collective bargaining rights – including at the University of Michigan, the University of Illinois, and the University of California. The University of Wisconsin, my alma mater, has had collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants for decades. The protections and voice that such rights provide only strengthen the university's teaching, research, and community.

I strongly urge a favorable vote on SB247, and greatly appreciate your time and consideration.

Adam Schneider (adamfschneider@gmail.com)

⁶ Dunn, S. (Apr 22, 2013). Colleges are slashing adjuncts' hours to skirt new rules on health-insurance eligibility. Chronicle of Higher Education. Available at <https://www.chronicle.com/article/colleges-are-slashing-adjuncts-hours-to-skirt-new-rules-on-health-insurance-eligibility/>.

⁷ University of Maryland. (February 10, 2023). Office of diversity and inclusion. <https://diversity.umd.edu/>. (The University of Maryland Graduate School opposed similar legislation last year.)

⁸ University System of Maryland. (February 10, 2023). Toward racial equity and justice. <https://www.usmd.edu/usm/workgroups/diversity/>. (The University of Maryland Graduate School opposed similar legislation last year.)

⁹ Towson University. (February 10, 2023). Towson university. <https://www.towson.edu/>. (The University of Maryland Graduate School opposed similar legislation last year.)

adelaida.shelley.pdf

Uploaded by: Adelaida Shelley

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Adelaida Shelley, former Teaching Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I was a TA at UMCP for two years and both witnessed and experienced first-hand how disempowered and voiceless GAs are. We had little to no say over working conditions, hours, and pay. We had little to no say over our relationships with our supervisors, especially when they took advantage of our vulnerable and subordinated status. And finally we had little to no say over decisions being made that affected all University System of Maryland workers. The right to join or form a bargaining unit will finally allow GAs to have a say over those very things. I left UMCP for personal reasons, but have kept in touch with my colleagues who continue push for this basic, fundamental human right to be extended to this sector of USM workers; workers without which the entire university system would cease to function.

Sincerely,
Adelaida Shelley
former Teaching Assistant
Department of American Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
Monte Pichincha #10, Miguel Hidalgo, CDMX 11930
ashelleyd@gmail.com

albert.nekimken.pdf

Uploaded by: Albert Nekimken

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee**

By Albert Nekimken

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. Thank you for the opportunity to add support from the University of Maryland, Global Campus, for the rights of all higher education faculty in the State of Maryland. Also, in my remarks today I hope to shine some light on my school's enigmatic position within the University System of Maryland by adding some unique reasons why we need the same right to bargain collectively with management that the non-teaching staff has long held.

At the outset, let me say that we all applaud UMGC's open enrollment policy that gives mainly working, adult students a fresh chance to reach their educational goals. Online course delivery serves both students and professors who are located around the country and around the world. In theory, the combination of a skills-oriented trade school that helps students enhance their job prospects together with an academic school that offers permanent, life-enhancing studies can work. At least, this is the theory.

My comments today reflect my own point of view as an adjunct professor of writing and the Humanities based on the very limited information available to me and within the legal scope of a potential union contract. These are compensation and working conditions.

During the ten years that I have taught at UMUC, now UMGC, with a Ph.D degree, I've advanced to the upper level of the scale for per-course compensation. Assuming that each eight-week course represents a 20-hour, part-time job, I computed my hourly wage at around \$25, excluding the hours required to prepare for courses and complete grades or participate in uncompensated, but required university activities.

Adding these extra hours brings my hourly compensation close to Maryland's minimum wage level of \$13.25 in contrast with the \$100 hourly rates of appliance and auto repair experts. In comparison, when I worked as a private-sector consultant more than twenty years ago, my time was billed to clients at the rate of \$1,000 per day.

Meanwhile, I have no healthcare, retirement or other benefits for which full-time faculty and staff qualify. Also, I must pay my own home office expenses. Worse, all but a few part-time professors at UMGC are hired and paid on a per-course basis with no assurance that they will ever be offered another course. (Those who rock the boat with complaints or criticism rightly fear potential retribution; they can be dropped from the "available" list at any time and for any undisclosed reason.)

Based on this experience, it is easy to understand why we have high faculty turnover.

Teaching for UMGC appeals to new graduates as a way to show some experience on their CVs. Qualified people newly retired from other occupations may want to teach as a hobby or for some needed, extra income. Another part-time group, young and old, teaches at multiple schools in multiple locations in an unrelenting effort to earn something close to a full-time income.

Mid-career academics consider working for UMGC a personal and professional dead end, if not a blemish on their CVs. UMGC funds no participation expenses for academic conferences or paid time to conduct research and prepare publications. In any case, they are unable to design courses that include their consequential insights. Faculty at UMGC spins in its own orbit separated from each other and from colleagues elsewhere.

Consider this background for my comments about “working conditions” as an area of concern. It also serves as a partial explanation of why I described UMGC’s position in the University System of Maryland as “enigmatic.”

Top down, UMGC really is different.

1. Traditionally, the primary goal of an academic institution has been to advance human knowledge through research and publication that was shared with students.
2. In contrast, UMGC does no research. Management’s goal appears to be the use of a corporate model to maximize profit by providing a standardized educational product, outsourcing as many functions as possible and keeping costs low.
3. Almost all classes are taught online by part-time faculty.
4. There is no Faculty Senate; there are no real academic departments.
5. With few exceptions, managers—not professors—design courses.
6. The school has only a handful of full-time professors; 100 of them for more than 60,000 students.
7. Tenure doesn’t exist.
8. The school has no physical campus or facilities, apart from a fortified administrative complex near College Park whose entrance has a security guard and bullet-proof glass.
9. Courses are run on eight-week cycles that make it almost impossible for students who work full time to read an entire book.
10. Students are guaranteed that they will not need to purchase books; all course materials come from free, online sources.
11. Managers will not pay to use copyrighted material.
12. The library has no books--only subscriptions to online resources--and a few expert librarians working while in fear of being replaced themselves by outsourced customer service representatives.

13. Flourishing plagiarism and other types of academic fraud led to creation of an entire admin department to deal with it—so long as “dealing” doesn’t imperil tuition revenue.

In short, UMGC spins in its own orbit out of sync with the other institutions that comprise the University System of Maryland.

From a bottom-up faculty point of view, all this easily explains the attractiveness of collective bargaining with a union contract.

When former UMGC president Miyares was asked publicly if the quality of education at UMUC was deteriorating, Miyares replied, "The market decides," meaning that paying customers vote with their dollars. This view was somewhat shaken when a federal Department of Education report examining how Pentagon funds were being used by vendors under contract on military bases around the world, it questioned why 70% had been allocated to “administration” and only 30% to instruction.

Fortunately, UMGC survived the attack because it has long been clear that the institution would likely collapse were it to lose its military contracts. Similarly, Miyares learned early in his tenure—before his corporate “Business Model” proposal was accepted by the Board of Regents in 2015—that, without the ability to put “University of Maryland” on its diplomas, enrollment overall would collapse.

Early on, professors feared that the Business Model was putting the school on a fast slide toward becoming a trade school/diploma mill that would degrade the credibility of all University of Maryland diplomas. Worse, there were no brakes in place, no Faculty Senate, no tenure and no meaningful “meet and confer” process.

The chair of the Adjunct Faculty Association, envisioned as representing thousands of professors, summarized meetings with management by saying, “We ask. Administration says ‘no.’”

This misguided process explains why faculty’s primary complaint is lack of respect. Management says “no” because it can.

- Faculty wonders why professors have been denied the right to bargain collectively while nonteaching staff can and does have union representation.
- Faculty wonders why numerous academic decisions are made without its participation.
- Faculty wonders why, with the exception of UMGC’s current CEO, few managers have significant teaching experience. Many have come from for-profit schools or from the private sector with no prior employment experience at any university.
- Faculty wonders why a bloated and well-paid administration appears to have ample funds while funding requests from professors are considered unaffordable.

From a professor’s point of view, this situation is disrespectful when it is not insulting.

Meanwhile, management tightly controls access to the all-faculty email list so that individual professors have no way of exchanging information because they are dispersed around the

country and the world. Lacking any physical facilities where they could meet, there are no opportunities for traditional union organizing or even for sharing information across professional silos.

At the same time, management makes available only select, limited amounts of information. The information most pertinent to faculty in understanding union issues can be deemed “proprietary” and withheld at will.

At traditional public universities only information about patented or potentially patentable research qualifies. However, UMGC does no research. As is common in the private sector, management uses information control to thwart union organizing efforts.

A faculty that feels exploited rather than respected will surely have detrimental effects on academic quality and real student achievement, especially the kind of effects that cannot be measured quantitatively or described with “analytics,” a territory in which the current president’s predecessor was an expert.

We hope that UMGC’s new president, Greg Fowler, will not use data analytics mainly to bamboozle legislators. Let me end my remarks with a plea that this legislature assure the right to bargain collectively with union representation based on binding contracts, rights that are enjoyed by virtually all other workers in Maryland. Look at the very positive example of Montgomery College and do not be deceived into believing that higher education will only be able to afford union contracts by raising student tuition. I believe that, as elected state representatives, you are too smart to fall for that trick. ●

Testimony - Montgomery College SB 175.pdf

Uploaded by: Alberto Baca Jr.

Position: FAV

To: State House of Representatives and Senate Finance Committee

From: AJ “Tito” Baca Jr., Ed.D.: President MC-AAUP

Re: Bill HB 247 / SB 175 – **IN FAVOR**

Date: February 15, 2023

The full-time faculty (FTF) at Montgomery College (MC) have been organized and represented by the AAUP national labor group for over 40 years. Up until this past year, the MC-AAUP has been the only FTF labor group in higher education with collective bargaining rights in Maryland. The MC-AAUP Chapter continues to play an integral role across our institution. We are proud to be part of the decision-making process as well as a collaborative solution-oriented effort at MC, which directly impacts students and academics at our institution. So, on behalf of our members and those whom we work with at MC, our Chapter proudly submits this testimony in support of faculty and graduate assistants in higher education around the state in their effort to organize, gain collective bargaining rights, and advocate for their respective institutions.

How is our Labor Group different than what you see on TV?

- We cannot and do not strike and do not negotiate in the media;
- We do not publicize internal matters except for verified extreme circumstances;
- We collaborate consistently and effectively with Management.

What is our charge?

- Engage, inform, and mobilize constituents but also hold to account;
- Negotiate terms of the (FTF) contract including compensation, benefits, grievance; process, working conditions, and means of collaboration with Management;

- Protect the Contract by utilizing embedded formal and informal strategies to resolve matters of concern;
- Serve as checks and balances related to hiring practices, dismissals, and those decisions that impact faculty and / or students;
- Collaborate with Management on the inner workings of the institution as they impact faculty, students, and academics;
- Navigate the grievance process, serve as informal mediator, find common ground solutions, and avoid grievances whenever possible.

How do we support students and the institution?

- Testify at County Council Budget Hearings each year to advocate for MC and our students;
- Proudly attend national labor group meetings to share and gather information about our Mission and collaborative relationship with Management;
- Support faculty and their right to academic freedom, which enhances the educational experience for students and affords students the right to choose classes that suit their ideological / academic interests;
- Negotiate salaries and benefits for faculty to help attract and retain instructors who come and stay at MC, which strengthens our respective programs;
- Approved the transfer of unused travel funds for 2 years to an emergency pandemic student fund to help students who had lost jobs, housing, medical care, or needed food.
- Contribute to MCAAUP scholarship fund to support several students each year;
- We give faculty a voice and in doing so afford Management the opportunity to make informed decisions, solve problems they may not be aware of, and help to create a sense of community engagement through various forums through-out the year.



www.mcaaup.org

Our Chapter plays an integral role across our institution, and we are proud of our contributions. We do not always agree with Management, but we have healthy and productive mechanisms in place to address those differences. At the end of the day, we recognize that one of the most effective ways to support our members includes advocating for a strong and healthy institution and our students, and we proudly do so.

alexander.hoyle.pdf

Uploaded by: Alexander Hoyle

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Alexander Hoyle, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

We have been fighting for collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants for decades, and now faculty have joined us in this crucial effort.

I have attached over two-hundred written testimonies submitted in support of graduate assistant collective bargaining rights in 2020, 2021, and 2022. Each letter speaks to the deep personal pain caused by Maryland’s systematic denial of basic democratic rights.

There are people who can’t see their families abroad because they can’t afford to travel. There are others who are forced into unsafe and illegal housing conditions. Still more have suffered workplace abuse that has gone ignored. At the same time, they’re held captive: if they leave their jobs early, then the years they’ve dedicated to their PhD are meaningless. Our international colleagues would face deportation.

As the teachers and researchers at the very heart of the University—and as employees of one of the wealthiest states in the nation—they deserve better.

Sincerely,
Alexander Hoyle
Graduate Assistant

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to you today to urge your support on SB 658. As a graduate student and graduate teaching assistant at the University of Maryland, I strongly believe this bill will work as an effective means to address many valid concerns of the GAs including unlivable wages, unregulated hours and mental health concerns. Without the collective bargaining rights, the GAs are unable to formally negotiate with the university to address these concerns.

Sincerely,

Abhijit Biswas
Graduate Assistant, Dept. of Electrical & Computer Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
Dept. of ECE, 2410 A.V. Williams Building, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742
abiswas3@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The stipend provided for 20 hr/week of work for the university is not sufficient for me. I have worked an additional job on my own time along with the stipend in order to pay my bills. Essentially, I worked the equivalent of a full time job, and then completed additional research and my classes. How can someone experience a healthy and complete life if >80 hr of it every week is used to make ends meet and study?

Sincerely,

Abhishek Ram
Graduate Assistant, Department of Mechanical Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
1811 Metzert Road, Apartment 102, Adelphi , Maryland 20783
aram8@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in staunch support of SB 118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. As a former graduate assistant and co-chair of the Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee (GAAC) at the University of Maryland College Park, I both experienced and witnessed firsthand the hardships faced by graduate assistants employed at the university. GAs repeatedly experienced lapses in pay, lapses in health coverage, intimidation from superiors, etc. The existence of the meet-and-confer policy did little to ameliorate these concerns; the very nature of meet-and-confer denies us any actually meaningful influence over university policy and procedure. It is wholly inadequate for dealing with the labor issues that plague the USM.

I ended up dropping out of my American Studies doctoral program this past October. In the face of the mounting costs of living in the DMV, I could no longer justify accepting such measly pay. At the time of my resignation, I was making under 20k a year, not including summers (during which I worked as a Lyft driver and Doordash delivery person in order to make ends meet). Even so, I believe I had a pretty good deal, relative to the aggregate of GAs at UMCP.

I've testified various times over the last couple years in favor of this bill before both the House and the Senate. My position on the matter is clear. I once again implore the members of this committee to see reason and allow this legislation to finally see the light of day.

Sincerely,

Adelaida Shelley

PhD, American Studies, UMCP (formerly)

Teaching Assistant (formerly)

7501 Blair Rd, Apt 101

Takoma Park, MD 20912

ashelleyd@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate research assistants should not be barred from forming a union, same as any other employees. The university views RAs as students sometimes and employees at other times, depending on what is profitable for the university.

A recent email from UMD admin was sent to faculty to thank them for their hard work during the pandemic. While faculty work to write the grants that bring in millions of dollars to UMD, RAs provide the data that is the backbone and centerpiece of these grants. UMD takes about 54% for overhead costs, but RAs are not paid livable wages for the area. Without RAs doing the science, this income source collapses. Yet, RAs are isolated in one lab with one supervisor in control of their yearly contract, their hours, and letters of recommendation vital to their career. This strict hierarchy leaves contracted RAs vulnerable to abusive working conditions, evidenced by studies finding higher rates of depression among grads compared to their peers working outside of academia. This is viewed by many as a rite of passage. I have seen this attitude firsthand when a faculty member at a general meeting told a story about how he decided to skip his toddler's birthday at the last minute in order to work more.

The strongest case for collective bargaining rights comes from UMD itself. Many UMD faculty see the inequity happening in academia. Mark Shayman, Associate Dean and ombudsman spoke to a reporter saying, "Sometimes faculty members do things and really there should be a response from the university, and there's not really a place for students to go where they feel they can be heard officially. There's something missing."

The "something missing" is collective bargaining. Please stand against inequity and unfair working conditions in academia by supporting collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Aimee Malzahn
Research Assistant, Dept of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture
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aimee.malzahn@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate workers are fundamental to carrying out the purpose of any research university. They are the researchers and teachers that keep the university functioning. In any other context, workers doing this kind of mission-critical work would be considered employees. As such, they deserve the right to organize, so that they may secure workplace protections --- from sexual harassment, abuse, and retribution for raising concerns --- that ensure safe working environments elsewhere. To continually deny this right to a group that is an engine for innovation, intellectual leadership, and economic growth in this state is a severe moral failing.

Sincerely,

Alexander Hoyle
PhD Student, Computer Science
Teaching Assistant
4800 Somerset Rd
Riverdale, MD
hoyle@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

As a PhD candidate in history, my goal has been to explore the countless courageous efforts of everyday people banding together to fight for justice, security, and dignity; to learn the collective strategies that lead to victory; and to extract the lessons from failure.

I have tried to use the lessons this history provides to effect change in my community and on my campus. For the past three and a half years, I have devoted myself to organizing my colleagues to fight for justice, security, and improved working conditions for my fellow graduate workers. As the Student Interest Liaison for the history department I am tasked with acting as a representative to the department on behalf of history graduate students concerning their working conditions; as the chair of the Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee, I act as a representative for all graduate workers and communicate our grievances and concerns to the university administration; as a representative to the Graduate Student Government I mobilized graduate students to push for greater protections and services; and as the President of Fearless Student Employees, I help spearhead the continuing legislative effort to pass a state law recognizing our status as employees entitled to national labor protections.

These roles have put me in a unique position to interact with the larger community of graduate students and hear about the struggles they are facing. Graduate workers are overworked, underpaid, and have little legal protections as workers. We lack medical or family leave, we are vulnerability due to our immigration status, we have no assistance for child care, we are at the whims of abusive supervisors, and we face racial, gender, and sexual discrimination. Graduate workers face a massive power imbalance when dealing with their employers and we lack any legal protections or means of redress because in the state of Maryland, graduate workers at public universities lack the rights afforded to other employees.

The situation has become even more dire in the Covid-19 pandemic. Graduate workers have had their workload increase, lost their assistantships, been forced to work in person without proper precautions, while being denied the vaccine because they are not “employees.”

Beyond the immediate concerns of graduate workers, the Covid-19 pandemic has terrifying implications for academia as a whole. In the past, the treatment of graduate workers was justified as a temporary initiation or “apprenticeship” which would guarantee a secure profession within the academy. However, the promise of a faculty position is increasingly becoming out of reach for many graduate students. The majority of those with humanities PhDs do not end up in academia and only a small fraction of those are able to secure a tenured-track position. The situation has become even more dire in the Covid-19 pandemic. Lost revenue, lower enrollments, and new expenditures have led to state budget cuts which have forced many universities to reduce the number of teaching assistantships, cancel grants and fellowships, and

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

impose hiring freezes. The full ramifications of this health crisis are still unknown but unless action is taken the result will be an ever-decreasing number of people choosing to pursue graduate degrees and jobs in academia.

The good news is that there is an easy step that will help ameliorate many of these problems: grant graduate workers in Maryland the same rights graduate workers at many public and all private universities already enjoy. The right to collective bargaining would allow us to a seat at the table and force the university to take our needs seriously.

I understand some are concerned about the potential budget implications of this act (especially in light of the pandemic), however, these concerns are unfounded. Collective bargaining is just that: *bargaining*. Just because the university is required to bargain in good faith with us, does not automatically translate into higher salaries for graduate workers. While higher salaries would of course be welcomed, there are a myriad of other benefits that graduate workers is the USM would gain from collective bargaining, that would not impact the budget. Clearer guidelines, contracts, improved grievance procedures, access to the Maryland State Higher Education Labor Relations Board – all of these would do wonders in improving the experience of graduate workers and would cost the state nothing.

Graduate workers are essential workers. Essential during the pandemic, essential to the running of the university system, and essential to a well-functioning society. Graduate students have much to contribute to US policy, economy, culture, and efforts to make a more just society. If we do not foster this kind of knowledge, we are doing our world a disservice. Therefore, I implore you to vote in favor of SB118.

Sincerely,

Alexander M. Dunphy
PhD, Department of History
Teaching Assistant
President, Fearless Student Employees
Chair, The Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee (GAAC)
1304 Saint Paul St. Baltimore, MD 21202
adunphy@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My department has faced strong criticism over the inequity in graduate assistantship assignments. Some graduate students have been given much easier workloads in comparison to others without much transparency of how these assignments were given or additional compensation for those with larger workloads. Furthermore, the hiring freeze brought on by COVID-19 has placed the department in dire straits with regard to professorial labor. There are now fewer full time professors than ever and there is no chance to replace those who have left. This has placed a disproportionate amount of the undergraduate teaching labor on graduate students, who have little say in negotiating their contracts to account for this additional responsibility.

Sincerely,

Alexander W Miller
Graduate Student, Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
8154 Miner Street, Greenbelt, MD 20770
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a graduate student at UMD, I am expected to work, research, and write full time; however, I earn far below a livable wage in the DMV area. Not only are graduate students massively underpaid, but we are also often dependent upon outside work, competitive fellowships, and outside funding just to afford basic living expenses. These additional jobs take away from our ability to do our best and most effective work at UMD - from teaching to researching.

Graduate students are treated as staff when it's financially expedient and we are treated as students when it can save time and hassle. For example, Prince George's County claims anyone working in higher ed in the county is eligible for the covid vaccine in phase 1b; however, when graduate students (who teach undergraduates) arrived for their vaccine, they were denied because they aren't "faculty," they're "students." This is just one example of how graduate students' status is dependent on what's most convenient for the University.

As graduate students, we deserve to advocate for our rights - not to have an administrator far removed from the trials of graduate school decide what's best for us. Graduate students deserve to have the agency to make these choices for ourselves.

Sincerely,

Alexis Walston
Graduate Assistant, Department of English
University of Maryland, College Park
7751 Alumni Dr, College park, MD 20742

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a graduate teaching assistant in the School of Music, I fully support graduate student workers' right to collective bargaining in the state of Maryland. To me, there is absolutely no downside to extending this right to graduate student workers who, as of 2022, are not paid a wage that is liveable or sustainable. When I speak to fellow teaching assistants in my division, I notice many flaws within the system that we currently operate in. Many of us have partners or kids or other extenuating circumstances which are not covered by the current amount that we are paid on either a 9.5 month or 12 month assistantship and most have some form of secondary income on top of our coursework and teaching duties. Housing in College Park is also a massive issue and the expectation to find our own safe and comfortable housing on the current stipend is completely unacceptable when the rent in most areas nearby is hovering around \$2000 a month.

To be more general, I would also note that in many other large universities across the country, the right to collective bargaining is a standard practice. I would actually argue that it is strange and unusual that such large celebrated universities in Maryland do not have this as an option. To me, it ensures safety, health, and fair treatment of graduate student workers. It is also absolutely a factor that a prospective graduate student will consider when choosing a school. How many students are passing up great offers and great opportunities at places like UMD because they fear not being protected?

Recent events and COVID-19 have shown that workers in every field want better for themselves and will not stand for conditions that compromise their mental and physical health. To be frank, I truly believe that if it continues this way, people are just going to take their business and labor elsewhere. I have greatly enjoyed my experience at UMD so far, but I want my classmates and future students to have the right to collective bargaining. I hope that the thoughts and experiences of myself and my colleagues will be taken into consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Henderson
Teaching Assistant, School of Music
University of Maryland, College Park
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ahender6@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am a doctoral student and graduate teaching assistant at the University of Maryland. I write to you today to request your support for collective bargaining for graduate students at UMD.

Despite significant contributions to the university, graduate students are often taken advantage of and treated unfairly in the workplace because we lack the collective power to negotiate for fair terms. As a graduate teaching assistant, I interact with up to 200 students per semester; these duties include teaching in my own classroom, holding office hours, grading homeworks, assignments, and exams, and contributing to lesson plans and testing instruments. As a senior TA, I also help manage a team of seven other teaching assistants. During this pandemic, the duties of graduate teaching assistants have expanded to include assisting professors with technology platforms (e.g. Zoom), developing online curriculums, and providing both instrumental and emotional support to our students: all responsibilities which should fall on the course instructor, who is compensated for our additional work. An education at UMD would be severely lacking without the expertise of graduate students.

Regardless of how our responsibilities increase, we are unable to negotiate an increase in pay or benefits. There have also been several occasions (experienced by myself and others) where our departments have verbally miscommunicated information about pay and benefits to graduate students, and expected us to continue our teaching responsibilities without clear terms. Teaching without written contracts means that our financial circumstances depends solely on the trust between a department and its students: a trust which has been violated several times in the past. There are no repercussions for these actions because graduate students have little to no power without a faculty member that sympathizes with them.

With the passing of collective bargaining for graduate students, the Maryland legislature has the power to change the circumstances of thousands of graduate students. This right will improve working conditions for graduate students at the University of Maryland, and show that the state does value our significant contributions to the state university system.

Sincerely,

Amanda E. Ng, MPH

PhD Student, Department of Epidemiology

Graduate Teaching Assistant

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

4200 Valley Drive, School of Public Health
College Park, MD 20742
ngamanda03@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I'm writing in support of SB 118 and granting collective bargaining rights to graduate assistants in the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland. As an employee, student, and former graduate assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park, I can testify that graduate assistants perform work that is necessary for a functioning university, and that enjoining them to perform this work without the right to collectively bargain is exploitative.

University administrators like to say that graduate assistants are “students first,” even writing such language into the Graduate School’s assistantship policies. The “students first” approach has not served to protect graduate assistants’ welfare and ability to balance earning wages with completing degree requirements, as administrators may claim, or is it intended to. Instead, it effectively denies an entire class of workers, who are also students, the rights they should be accorded as workers.

A note about what graduate assistants do: Many teach multiple course sections of undergraduate and graduate students, including large general education and core or introductory courses. Often the first instructors and advisors students encounter at the College Park campus are graduate student workers. Graduate assistants conduct the research on which faculty members depend for their own advancement, often taking on hands-on and/or repetitive tasks that faculty members and staff will not do. Graduate student workers keep labs and studies running while faculty members devote time to pursuing grants and other external funding on which the university bases its research enterprise. Graduate assistants also fill crucial administrative roles, working as academic advisors to large numbers of fellow students, or developing and running programs at the many centers on campus – such as the LGBT Equity Center and Multicultural Student Involvement and Community Advocacy (MICA) at the Stamp Student Union. Often the first mentorship students enjoy at the College Park campus comes to them through the persons or labor of graduate student workers.

I work in the University Libraries on the College Park campus, and have previously submitted testimony to the Assembly about how graduate assistants do all of the above work and more in the Libraries. Many core library functions depend on the labor of graduate assistants. These include teaching, metadata management, user research and usability, processing archival collections, outreach, and maintaining digital systems. Graduate assistants are involved in every

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

program and resource with which the Libraries cultivate community and knowledge sharing. Nearly everything a librarian does here, a graduate assistant also does.

The university would collapse were graduate assistants to withhold their labor. University administrators across Maryland have long resisted collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants out of fear, using duplicitous and divisive means. It's time for the General Assembly to hold these state institutions to account. **Graduate student workers are workers.**

Sincerely,

Amy Wickner

Ph.D. Candidate, iSchool

Electronic Records Archivist (2017-), Digital Projects Graduate Assistant (2014-2017),

University of Maryland Libraries

2216 Hornbake Library

4130 Campus Drive

College Park, MD 20740

amy.wickner@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a graduate research assistant in College Park, I find that passing SB118 is essential to the wellbeing of graduate workers across all campuses in the USM.

As a student in the Electrical & Computer Engineering department, I have above average funding, and my advisor allows me to have a good work-life balance. However, even with my current stipend it is difficult to afford living in the DC area. Those with average or below average stipends can find it nearly impossible. This problem only gets worse each year, as the approximately 1% annual cost-of-living increases do not keep up with rent increases, not to mention the increases in other costs. Regardless, stipend and work-life balance are highly dependent on my department, advisor, and campus of study. On an individual level, no graduate student can petition for improvements in their working conditions, especially when such issues vary wildly between departments and campuses. Such improvements can only be attained through collective bargaining.

Of course, even if graduate students decide not to unionize, we should have the ability to decide that for ourselves. We are workers and keep the wheel of academia turning through our research and teaching, and as such should have the freedom to bargain for our rights if we so choose. SB118 is a necessary step to having that freedom, and I sincerely hope that the bill is passed.

Sincerely,

Andrew Goffin
Research Assistant, Electrical and Computer Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
7763 Riverdale Rd Apt 302, New Carrollton, MD 20784
atgoffin95@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I think, graduate assistants are the backbone of the University academic system. They have many prescribed and subtle duties. They are morally, physically and mentally committed to the academic system. I think, depending on their work, the payment they are getting is not really appreciable. I hereby, support this petition that GAs should get appreciable amount of money to get financial satisfaction to get their job done efficiently.

Sincerely,

Anmol
Teaching Assistant, ANSC
University of Maryland, College Park
4324 Rowalt drive, Collegepark, Maryland 20740

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am submitting this testimony in support of the efforts of the graduate assistants at the University of Maryland to achieve collective bargaining rights.

I have had a 45-year career as a trade unionist: a rank and file member, an elected leader and a staff member in multiple positions and with various unions. I know from personal experience that there is nothing that provides more respect and dignity and protection on the job to working people than collective bargaining. One of my unions, the United Auto Workers, represented graduate student-employees at campuses across the nation. The experience of union membership made their members better able to serve their universities and their students.

Collective bargaining turns a chaotic situation for graduate assistants into a prescribed, livable, predictable and just student-employee experience. The result is a more effective corps of teachers, researchers and workers.

Sincerely,

Ann F Hoffman
Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law Alumna
University of Maryland, Baltimore
1390 Kenyon Street NW, #610, Washington, DC 20010
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I have been a Graduate Assistant for 2 years. I have greatly enjoyed my experience as a GA and have been thankful for the boss I have had in my position for being empathetic and meeting the expectations of our work agreements. However, I know that not all GAs are as lucky as I have been and that the graduate student worker position on campus can be fraught with power inequities. I am here to speak up and speak out against UMD's exploitation of student workers. I am here to speak up for our rights as graduate student workers.

Sincerely,

Anne Richardson
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I think graduate assistants are underpaid in a way that they have large burden of works but still not enough resources to live a good life. Therefore, an increase in payscale would help the graduate assistants improve their quality of life and hence their academic performance.

Sincerely,

Anonymous
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3409 tulane drive, hyatsville, MARYLAND 20783
bibekbattachan2017@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am a PhD candidate in University of Maryland, doing research in Quantum Optics, and also an international student from Greece.

First of all, the proposed bill will allow graduate students to collectively bargain if they choose to do so, possibly starting by forming a union. This is not an end-goals in itself; it is the suggestions it will put forward that justify its existence. And talking about suggestions and needs...

I've heard previously that I should primarily think of myself as a student working towards their dissertation, instead of as a worker meriting compensation for all hours of work. Our labs receive millions of funding to develop solutions and prototypes by doing very real work. Commonly, our professors rely on graduate students and post-docs to operate these labs. Yet, our love for science and the fact that we DO acquire a lot of knowledge during our PhDs have been distorted into a "students-and-not-workers" label by the Dean of the Graduate School in a previous hearing for the bill. This label allows the university to pay stipends averaging \$20k/year.

In any case, I get paid "like a student", but I cannot pay rent or eat "like a student". We also heard that a certain survey showed that the living cost in Maryland does not exceed roughly \$20k/year. I AGREE with this statement. In fact, it's hard to miss how literal it is. One will live with \$20k/year; they will not die – excluding emergencies. If the assumption here is that graduate students do not deserve to satisfy every single one of a list of needs like a healthy diet AND decent housing AND leisure activities AND financial protection from medical emergencies – and all of this in one of the most expensive areas in the United States – then I am unpleasantly surprised by this assumption.

Moving on, to working conditions and advisor-advisee relationships, UMD does have grievance mechanisms in place. Grievance mechanisms that can really only address isolated incidents of guideline violation. When it comes to issues like work hours, vacation days, or even participation to science outreach events, then University guidelines are overlooked widely and wildly. Especially international students feel pressured to follow all of their advisor professor's requirements, since their legal status in the country is tied to their degree. An advisor professor holds an enormous amount of power over the student and their relationship determines the student's later career. A certain professor was as respectful as to say, "I tend to ignore emails about these statements of mutual expectations" (which is a recently earned right for graduate students. Who will risk pushing back? By the way, I believe that this answers another one of Dean Fetter's concerns, that a union could be an intermediary complicating the mentor-mentee

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relationship: it is an advisor not tending to the needs and realities of their advisees that complicates this relationship.

Let me conclude by saying: UMD graduate assistants are facing issues that are known and unaddressed. This means that the only ones who can advocate for them are themselves, and the right to collective bargaining serves exactly that necessity. We are not asking for the right to advocate for unfairly high salaries, laziness or disruption – we are just stating that not having collective bargaining rights undermines the work we are doing, challenges any reasonable line of thought and compromises our dignity. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Antonios Kyprianidis
PhD Candidate, Department of Physics
Research assistant
8417 Flower Ave, Apt 4, Takoma Park, MD 20912
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support this collective bargaining rights because the cost of living continues to go up in the DMV area. This is not seen to be reflected in our teaching assistantships/graduate funding package in terms of what our stipend is. Also when you think about BIPOC having to be overworked because they look towards other means of income it is not right and could ultimately affect their academic success in graduate school because they have financial stressors that they're white colleagues may not have.

Sincerely,

Ari Perez
Graduate Student
University of Maryland, College Park
701 Domer Ave, Takoma Park, MD 20912
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Together with President Pines and others I celebrate the high position our university (joint with UMB) achieved in the research spending rating. However, it's striking for me that Graduate Assistants in the same university earn so little compared to other GA's nationwide. According to GAAC, we have a 5000\$ cost of living deficit. I am on my first year, and I dread my first summer. I'm not allowed to search for additional funding because of comprehensive examinations. I doubt that COVID situation will be good enough for me to return home. I don't think I will be able to save enough money from my current stipend, and my visa doesn't allow me to work besides my TA-ship. My parents are not poor, but they live in another country, and their wages are below poverty threshold when translated to USD. I came to the US with the hope that I can survive on my own, but I don't see much opportunities as of now. I believe collective bargaining will allow me and other Graduate Assistants to get out of such dead-end situations and find a solution together with our university.

Sincerely,

Arseniy Braslavskiy
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Collective bargaining rights are crucial because of the power dynamics between professors and graduate students. Graduate students, especially those pursuing phds or international students, are dependent on their professors for essentially the continuation of their careers. Funding, employment, career opportunities, visas are all funneled through their research advisor. However, if this arrangement becomes abusive, there are no options for graduate students. There is an immediate fear of retribution, of having absolutely no power over the course of one's life other than to forfeit all of the work they've done or to continue suffering the abuse. Collective Bargaining is necessary to give graduate students rights. This is not a serfdom. Graduate students doing work for their professors is a mutually beneficial agreement, and collective bargaining is necessary for this to be formally recognized.

Sincerely,

Astha Singhal
Graduate Student, CMNS
University of Maryland, College Park
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

I believe graduate students should have the right for collective bargaining. It ensures a healthy job environment and basic rights for the graduate students. Amidst the global pandemic COVID-19, many of us are struggling with their life both physically and mentally. Proper care should be given in order to address them. That's why I support this collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

Atiqur Rahman
Graduate Assistant
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arasif19@terpmail.umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The University of Maryland at College Park has one of the lowest cost of living to graduate stipend ratios among similar institutions in the United States. According to the MIT Living Wage Calculator, a living wage in Baltimore, MD is \$15. 81 per hour. This means graduate students at the University of Maryland currently earn between ten and fifteen thousand dollars below a living wage. As an institution located in the Washington, DC metro area, rent and other living costs are difficult to afford for students while maintaining a healthy quality of life that includes access to fresh food, medical care, and being able to cover basic expenses without constant stress. My partner and I live in Baltimore city. I am a graduate research assistant at UMD College Park and work part time in retail to make ends meet. He is a student at UMBC and teaches computer programming classes through UMBC Training Centers for work. We live in a one bedroom apartment and pay \$900 per month between the two of us for rent. We spend roughly \$125 per week on food for the two of us and rarely eat out. We keep our phone, car, and insurance payments as low as we can. It is still virtually impossible to save enough money to cover something like an unexpected medical expense or car repair. The graduate students at the University of Maryland need collective bargaining rights so that they can effectively advocate for stipends that are livable and just. The state higher education institutions of Maryland have the opportunity to set an example of what it means to pay graduate students fairly instead of perpetuating an abusive system that keeps graduate students barely able to keep their head above water financially. Graduate students already hold degrees. We are trained professionals doing valuable research and work in our fields that benefits our state's economy, environment, and well-being. The graduate assistants at the University of Maryland need to help of the legislature to win our right to bargain for our needs instead of being disregarded students who are not part of our state's prosperity. We are Maryland's future success and progress. We should be able to pay our bills.

Sincerely,

Aubrey Tingler
Research Assistant, Department of Environmental Science and Technology
University of Maryland, College Park
2504 N Calvert St Apt 1, Baltimore, MD 21218
atingler@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of collective bargaining rights for graduate employees, and I strongly urge you to pass SB 118. As a faculty member at the University of Maryland, College Park I watch graduate student workers teach courses that are integral to the functioning of our department. Graduate student workers often teach courses on their own and are responsible for all aspects of being the instructor of record in addition to their coursework and research. Compared to the faculty who teach these courses they are not being adequately compensated for the work that they do. GAs are denied the right to bargain for salary increases even though many of them do the same work as lecturers on campus, who are considered university employees. Without the GAs in our department we would not be able to offer the number of classes we do and our undergraduate degree program would not be able to function.

Additionally, student workers need collective bargaining rights in order to be protected from exploitation in the workplace and to bargain for needed benefits. Many graduate student workers are unfairly asked to work more hours than their stated contract, which impacts their academic progress, yet they do not have the recourse of union protection. Their work benefits the university at the expense of their own studies. Graduate student workers help make the university run and deserve representation when their labor is fundamental to our ability to offer courses to undergraduates. GAs should not have to live in precarious positions, without access to needed benefits, and without the rights to bargain for these benefits when they are workers who provide the education that students pay for at the University of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Bayley J. Marquez, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of American Studies

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate workers are critical to any research organization/university. They deserve the right to organize and demand for better working conditions and bargain compensations and benefits.

Sincerely,

Bharat Prakash
Research Assistant
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

UMD has one of the lowest paying grad schools located in a college town with a very high cost of living. With the current RA salary from my department, a grad student can only afford sub-standard housing with living conditions detrimental to their physical and mental health. Thus, I believe the right to collective bargaining is crucial for grad students to lead a healthy lifestyle which could positively affect their productivity.

Sincerely,

Bhargav Sai Chava
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate assistants are not paid a living wage. Most of us are working over 40 hours a week if you combine the time we are in our own classes, teaching/working, meeting with students, grading, and studying/researching. Most of my peers spend a majority of their stipend on rent with little additional leftover for other living costs. This is unfair and dangerous considering the baseline stresses associated with graduate school. We should be able to feel comfortable and safe. Unionizing will allow us to lobby for increased wages.

Sincerely,

Bianca Licitra
Graduate Assistant, English
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

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Supporting

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

I am writing in support of SB118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. I am a PhD candidate in History at the University of Maryland, College Park. During my time here at the university, there have been numerous efforts at trying to try to gain collective bargaining rights for graduate students. I have supported each of these efforts because it is my fundamental belief that workers have the right to organize their workplace to improve their conditions. Graduate students, in addition to being students, are workers. We teach classes, run labs, grade assignments, staff administrative positions, and maintain our library and archival services. Graduate student-workers are often the most forward-facing contacts that students, staff, professors, and visitors have when they are at UMD. Because of the vital role played by graduate student workers, we should have the right to organize and collectively bargain as workers.

When discussing collective bargaining and potential unionization, the focus is often on wages and compensation, but for many, the issue is less with pay than with our working conditions. Collective bargaining would provide an opportunity to create a more equitable and open work environment. For graduate student workers, often their conditions are the product of a vague and ad-hoc set of traditions determined by individual professors or administrators. Even with the introduction of statements of mutual expectations, there are still unresolved problems with respect to their enforcement or if the student-worker has a dispute. Graduate student workers are often placed in a delicate situation where their boss is often an adviser or committee member. This means in a dispute they run the risk of damaging their academic career prospects. They would further have to rely on the broader academic department which may or not choose to advocate for a student over a colleague. Collective bargaining would not end disputes, but it would allow for more formalized means of redress.

In addition to providing a more equitable means of resolving work disputes, collective bargaining would also offer an opportunity to create a more coherent system of compensation. Even beyond disparities between different colleges and fields, within departments there is a lot of opacity and inconsistency regarding compensation for performing the same jobs.

Collective bargaining would also offer other opportunities for graduate student workers to be classified as workers, and not students. Though this shift would feature some drawbacks, overall, the benefits would outweigh the costs. One obvious benefit is that as employees, students would have access to the protections offered through law for workers who become pregnant and need access to family leave. Right now, they are left out of such protections. There are other benefits that would come through being classified as workers, even things like payroll taxes which would incorporate graduate student workers into the welfare system.

Collective bargaining is the right of every worker. It is a practice that exists at our peer institutions in the Big Ten as well as other universities in neighboring states. In a climate in

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which all workers are being subjected to greater pressure to perform in difficult circumstances, collective bargaining is a necessary tool to ensure that we are protected from exploitation.

Brian R Sarginger
PhD Candidate, History Department
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

The United States has the most impressive model for scientific advancement in the world. The work is done by droves of brilliant people - graduate students. We pay them next to nothing. That's part of what keeps innovation cost effective. However, given the tremendous contribution graduate students make, all of them should at least be able to make enough money to get their basic needs met. I spend 74% of my take-home pay on rent. Graduate students aren't asking for fortunes, but they should be able to afford to eat.

This is not a Covid-19 related issue, but if the current pandemic helps amplify our voice for equitable compensation, use it.

Sincerely,

Brian Scott
Graduate Assistant, ENST
University of Maryland, College Park
4327 Clagett Road, University Park, Maryland 20782
bscott33@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of SB 118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. Last semester, I had the opportunity to serve as a teaching assistant for the first time. I am very passionate about education and I'm glad I had the opportunity to share ideas and knowledge with inquisitive students. However, this experience greatly strengthened my belief that graduate students have earned the right to collectively bargain for adequate compensation and benefits. While the work of a graduate assistant is very intellectually and emotionally rewarding, the increasing cost of living in the state of Maryland and the declining job prospects throughout academia (and the labor market as a whole) have left many students in a very vulnerable economic position. Unfortunately, a passion for education cannot pay bills. The financial benefits provided by graduate assistantships are not commensurate with the time commitment and effort that these jobs require. Therefore, graduate student should be granted the right to negotiate for compensation that is proportional to the value of our work.

It is easy to imagine – as I did before I became a teaching assistant – that graduate assistantships are simply “a part of our training” and are mutually beneficial to the student and the university. However, I've come to realize that many graduate assistants are in a position where they must actively sacrifice their academic progress to fulfill the requirements of their assistantships. It is not unusual for teaching assistants to spend hours crafting lessons, familiarizing themselves with course materials, grading assignments, and answering questions from students. In some cases, teaching assistants are effectively asked to design entire courses – picking readings, establishing assignments and grading scales, etc. It is not unusual for students to write in our anonymous course feedback surveys that they learned as much or more from a teaching assistant as they did from the professor. I say this not to denigrate professors (they delegate these teaching responsibilities in order to free up time for important research), but to emphasize the fact that the work graduate students do is essential to the functioning of the university.

Considering the significance of the work we do, I believe that graduate students should be granted the right to collectively bargain like other university and state employees. I hope you will consider my testimony and others as you deliberate on this issue. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Brice Bowrey

PhD, Department of History, UMCP

Teaching Assistant

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

20 Ridge Rd., Unit B
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a graduate student and research assistant in the School of Public Policy at UMD. I would like to urge you to support SB 118. Graduate student assistants often put in far more than the 20 hours per week we are compensated for, contributing to the advancement of research, education of students, and well-being of society. We deserve the right to collectively bargain, to be treated as employees, and to be able to air grievances to the Higher Education Relations Board.

Sincerely,

Brinda Yarlagadda
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

What the legislature must decide now is whether it will recognize the rights of workers who happen to be university students in the manner that it recognizes the rights of all other public and private sector workers. The State should follow the same legal standards with respect to its own employees that it requires of all other employers within the state. This means accepting an obligation to bargain with a union if student workers choose to organize one.

Sincerely,

BRUCE LEVINE
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I have worked as a graduate student assistant at both the University of Maryland and the University of Wisconsin. My pay from both institutions was about the same, but the cost of living in the DC metro area is dramatically higher than it is in Wisconsin. The right to collectively bargain is an important tool to ensure graduate assistants receive appropriate compensation for their labor and, most significantly, a living wage.

Sincerely,

Carter Reitman
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of SB118 the work of teaching and research assistants makes the University of Maryland a top institution of higher learning and ensures that students achieve positive learning outcomes. Nevertheless, we are not recognized as workers and are limited in exercising our rights. The current system is unsustainable and is driving talented teachers and scholars away from the University, particularly in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

We work far more hours than we are contractually obligated to and receive poverty-level wages in return. Many people have to moonlight in outside jobs, or overload their hours at the University to the detriment of their research to meet the high cost of living in the Baltimore-Washington Metro area. While our contracts limit our hours to 20 a week, I have personally worked 50-60 hours in certain points in the semester, between leading discussion sections for over 70 students, grading exams and papers, and responding to student inquiries. I also take on outside work whenever possible to make ends meet. These deficiencies have been exacerbated by the move to online learning, which has required us to learn new technologies and teaching strategies and keep track of a litany of students' illnesses and life complications.

Before I entered UMD, I worked in two different jobs covered by collective bargaining agreements. These are not radical documents. Rather, they establish rule of law and predictable conditions and outcomes in the workplace. Currently, at UMD we have no grievance procedure, no recourse to an HR department, no ability to take sick days, and no say in the terms of our employment. At a time when there is increasing attention on equality and safety in the workplace, it is shameful that the University of Maryland system would disregard potential issues in the workplace and allow this state of affairs to persist.

With this bill, we are asking for the same right to collectively bargain as other workers. We need to meet with the administration on equal footing to improve conditions. I urge you vote to legally recognize graduate student employees' right to choose to collectively bargain. By recognizing the voices of graduate workers, assistant-supervisor relationships, teaching performance, and research would improve to the benefit of the entire student body.

Sincerely,

Charlie Fanning

Teaching Assistant and Doctoral Candidate, History

1151 West Cross St.

Baltimore, MD 21230

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a first-year student pursuing my MFA in Studio Art at the University of Maryland, College Park. I support this campaign because as both contracted workers and full time students, we deserve collective bargaining rights to insure fair and safe treatment in the workplace, negotiation for contracts and stipends, and the right to fight for other benefits and protections as a recognized labor organization.

In the history of student labor organizing, many colleges and university administrations have fought student worker's unions on the basis that students are students, and thus their primary function is to learn, not to work. Yet though we are students, we are also workers and employees of the state of Maryland. For many of us, our stipends and assistantships are our sole income to support ourselves and often to help support our households or family members.

The ability to bargain collectively would grant me and my fellow student-workers greater security in our jobs. I know I would have greater confidence in negotiating my contract and expressing my desire in the areas of conditions, salary, and job protections. I would feel less fear of reprimand or dismissal from my program if I knew my contract was equitably bargained for and not just the matter of internal and administrative decision making. I would love to understand with transparency how state funds are distributed to GAs and other graduate workers. As a state worker of Maryland, I want to be able to collectively bargain for my rights with my peers and unionize should we choose to do so.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I moved to Maryland to begin grad school. My partner who relocated with me struggled with their job placement in the healthcare field (due to medical scribes being used less in clinical settings during the pandemic), and they were out of work for several months due to this underemployment. During this time, I was in my first semester ever of TA-ing at UMD. I didn't really know my rights as a Graduate Assistant or feel a sense of community with other graduate workers. I paid for all of my household's expenses this fall with my GA salary, which barely covered it—if I did not have even the slight financial safety net that I am lucky to have, I would have had to find other employment to supplement my salary, which would have strongly impeded my success in the MFA program. With collective bargaining in place, I would have had more resources and community to draw on when I struggled, as well as an awareness of options for advocating for more COVID-19 financial protections or an increased salary with the broader graduate student worker community.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Sincerely,

Charlotte Rachel Richardson-Deppe
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

As a graduate student employee working 20 hours per week and attending class full-time, my dedication to the University of Maryland-College Park is self-evident. As a communications assistant in a large College on campus, I produce content accessible to students, alumni, researchers and other professionals. Essentially, I act as a community liaison and play a part in setting the public image of the University.

I am dedicated to both my studies and work on campus, and aspire for the University to succeed on a national and international platform. However, whether the University treats graduate student employees with similar respect can at times seem tenuous.

If the University of Maryland-College Park were as fearless as it claims, the right for students to collectively bargain would be a nonissue. Other universities that have such rights boast graduate students who feel backed and heard by their university, making for great success in graduate school. Moreover, much of that graduate student success is a reflection of the university, which benefits similarly in promotion and research dollars .

If the University of Maryland-College Park wishes to position itself as a premier research and higher education institution in the Big 10, then the University must accept the responsibility of maintaining a professional relationship with graduate student employees. Simply allowing the right to collectively bargain, if students so choose, as dictated in MD SB118, seems incremental progress in a forward-thinking direction in this regard. Thanks to the Committee for consideration of MD SB118.

Sincerely,

Chris Samoray

Masters, Plant Science & Landscape Architecture

Graduate Assistant

2139 Plant Sciences Building, 4291 Fieldhouse Drive, College Park, MD 20742

ATTN: Chris Samoray

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

We are paid for 20 hours of work per week. If this was actually a part time job, we might be able to get a second job to reach a livable annual wage. However, the 20 hour work week is a lie, and no PI, at least in my department, would allow a student to work so little. When I signed on to work with my advisor, he told me 60 hours per week was minimum to be a successful PhD student.

In my first year of graduate school, I worked an average 80 hour week. Sometimes it got up to 100 hours per week with coursework and my RA. In this situation I would often sleep on campus because my hour commute was precious time I couldn't afford to waste. In my second year I made a bed in the closet of my office; in my third year I lived out of my office for about a month. Even now, in my fifth year of graduate school, I have a box with a sleeping bag and pillow inside it just in case the need arises.

I operate million dollar pieces of equipment in my lab. I work with temperatures colder than the deepest darkest part of space. This is skilled labor. If I were paid minimum wage for even 40 hours per week instead of 20--a standard work week!--my life would improve and I might not be so constantly stressed. Yet, because I am a "student" (who no longer takes courses) instead of an "employee", I have no rights to even try to improve my situation.

I am in graduate school because I love physics and want to be a physicist. I am going to continue to the end because this is the only way for me to accomplish my dream. This is true for so many of us: and the professors and department know we have no other choice but to do what they ask, or give up what we want our futures to be. They take the passion of students and leverage it to eek out as much value as they can from us, and it results in an abysmal quality of life for the time we are here. Please help us.

Sincerely,

Christie Trimble
Research Assistant, Department of Physics
University of Maryland, College Park
5401 McGrath Blvd , Rockville, MD 20852

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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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SB 118
Supporting

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

If there has ever been a time to do what it right, this is it. We are in a significant economic, social, and public health crisis, but we are also in a key moment for meaningful political change. Passing Senate Bill 118 is but one crucial step to help protect workers' rights and invest in the lives of all who live, work, and learn in the state of Maryland.

I am writing to express my strongest of the right of graduate student workers to collectively bargain, and I see that as a win for the state of Maryland and for higher education. Graduate student employees at the University of Maryland provide crucial, extensive, and diverse labor in the form of research, teaching, and administrative tasks that are all essential to the operation of this university. The State of Maryland has already recognized the right of other workers at our state university to collectively bargain. The exclusion of workers who are also graduate students is unacceptable and should be immediately corrected. The right to collectively bargain is now an established right of graduate student workers in states that are home to the country's top-ranking public research universities – such California, Michigan, Illinois, Washington, and New Jersey. These universities include existing and aspirational peer institutions for the University of Maryland, as well as fellow members of the Big Ten. They also join many other states, such as Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Iowa, Oregon, and our neighboring state of Delaware in recognizing this important right. Leading private universities such as Columbia University and New York University also recognize this shared right of all private and public sector workers. At these universities, it has been shown that a recognized work force benefits not only workers but also the educational experience of its students and the status of its research record. I served for five years as Director of Graduate Studies in my department, and we lost many of our top recruits to our program in favor of those at the University of California, University of Michigan, Rutgers University, and New York University in large part due to the kind of support these schools offer to an organized and recognized graduate student work force. There is no contradiction that graduate students are both students and workers, in this case at the same institution; the contradiction is only that the latter status is denied, eroding the integrity of the university itself.

If the University of Maryland wants to maintain and improve its status among the ranks of the best universities in this country, it is imperative that it, too, recognize all of its workers. Moreover, this public health crisis has made it even more visible how important it is that all

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workers have the right to be active participants in shaping the conditions of their labor. It is crucial that states like Maryland stand up and reiterate their long-standing support for all of the people who live and work there, and to provide a strong, forward-thinking model that will continue to demonstrate Maryland's status as a leader.

Sincerely,

Christina Hanhardt

Associate Professor, Department of American Studies (for identification purposes only)

University of Maryland, College Park

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate workers at many public and all private universities already have the right to unionize. Furthermore, our bill says nothing about grads having to unionize or what any units would look like. All we want to do is remove the language that specifically denies our status as employees and allow grads at each university in Maryland the right to choose for themselves if a union is right for them.

Sincerely,

Christopher Williams
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am now a GA at UMD. I recognize the hard effort that UMD is helping with international student like me. Due to COVID, our life has been tough. The price is going up right now, due to inflation. We need GA to support our life and academics.

Sincerely,

Chung-Hao Lee
Graduate Assistant
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Unionization is the most powerful way for workers to protect themselves from more powerful institutions. It is, quite frankly, insulting that we as graduate students must fight this hard simply to obtain the ability to collectively bargain. As a result of this, our pay is significantly below what would be expected, given living expenses in the area. I am forced to live at home in Baltimore and commute to avoid the exorbitant cost of living near College Park. Beyond this, we graduate students are limited in the ability to find work outside of our duties as teaching or research assistants, given both the restrictive language given in our employment contracts and the long hours required to work and attend class not allowing much time for work extracurricular work anyway. It is our right as workers to come together and improve our working conditions by collectively flexing our strength in the only way we can: through unionization.

As a result of the COVID pandemic and related staff shortages, my work as a lab TA places a much larger burden on me than prior to the pandemic. We are working with students who have missed significant in-person lab time, which has resulted in then missing significant lab skills which they otherwise would have had. As a result, I am forced to hold a greater degree of responsibility, and pay more attention in order to ensure safety in the lab. Additionally, the preparation for the lab is often incomplete, requiring me to scramble to grab chemicals from the stock room in the few minutes between me arriving to lab and the students beginning the experiment. Despite this increase in responsibilities, there has been no corresponding increase in compensation. Collective bargaining would allow us as graduate students to take advantage of the University's heavy reliance on underpaid labor to fight for better working conditions.

Sincerely,

Collin John Vincent
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining rights because the current administration's practices for determining our cost of living are ignorantly inaccurate at best and intentionally skewed to depress wages below livable conditions at worst. While I'd like to give them the benefit of the doubt, I am too hungry to do so. Many of our graduate students rely on mutual aid, food pantries, and a 2nd or 3rd job on top of their coursework and GA work to survive. We're living in moldy basements and apartments full of bedbugs. We're working longer hours than our contracts allow with absolutely no recourse available. I currently work an additional 25 hours per week outside of my GA contract, while attempting to take 4 courses and work on my own research. We're on a fast track to burning out the 'best and brightest' that the university both brags about and depends on. The current system is unsustainable, and the strategy of throwing spare nickels at us when other universities start to strike can only last so long.

Sincerely,

Connie Siebold
Research Assistant, Department of Information Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing in support of SB 658 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act.

We, graduate students, deserve the right to organize as any other employees and this should be enough, but it hasn't been in the past many years and I will try to follow with some arguments that we should take into account.

Graduate students are an incredible high skilled work force in this country, making universities work the way they do. However, grad students recognition is below anything that I've experienced.

We do not have fixed work hours, we are supposed to work whenever our adviser tells us to, none of the extra hours or night shifts are paid because we live in the false pretense that science should be a work for the ones that really want this in their lives, despite having no reassurance that this will be our future (because no matter how hard we work, a position as a professor or a tenure are never guaranteed). And yet we are the work force that gives prestige and recognition to our University.

In our duties we are supposed to teach, to run experiments in the lab, to write papers and in the meantime advance with our dissertation - our own project. But the conditions we have when we start grad school are far from optimal and I start with the most striking one.

Our payment.

We have to choose to live in houses that are not friendly to a working environment just because it is cheaper, or just because we want to have a car and need that money for car insurance or because we have student debt that needs to be paid. We have to lose ourselves in financial adjustments and to figure out how many meals out we can have because the money might not be enough until the end of the month. Why don't we cook it ourselves? We wish we could do it all the time but unfortunately the late nights at work sometimes do not allow the time to do it. We often live in decrepit houses just to have enough money to travel somewhere at a certain time of the year. And talking about traveling, we often do not have any vacation stipulated in our rights. This is something that we have to manage with our adviser under no contract or vacations days. and When we do, we are often bound to money constraints because we can't even rent a car for a full week.

I am an international student which means that I like to go see my family at least once a year, but in the first 3 years here, those visits could only happen if and only my family paid for my trip because I couldn't save enough money.

These are the struggles of being a grad student and I am afraid that this is a burden that is too big

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to carry for many of us. The negative view surrounding Grad School is dire, and often perceived as a terrible choice in life, instead of being something to be proud of, something to be grateful that we can do our work in an intellectual environment of learning and growth.

We deserve to be heard, we deserve to have our rights in contracts that protects us from our superiors and more than that, we deserve to be paid accordingly to the work that we do.

We deserve the right to organize, so that we could secure workplace protections in all forms : from sexual harassment, abuse, and retribution for raising concerns --- that ensure safe working environments.

Sincerely,

Custodio de Oliveira Nunes
Graduate Assistant, CBMG
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students are essential workers. Over the past year, we have lionized the essential workers that make our society function: the grocery store clerks, the delivery people, the frontline health care workers. Although graduate students may not be as essential as these workers during a pandemic, they are essential to the enterprise of the contemporary research university. Indeed, if we see the educational opportunities provided by the University of Maryland as essential to the future success of the state, then we must see the success of graduate students as integral to that success. Graduate students teach tens of thousands of students each semester. They support the research endeavors of faculty, often while pursuing independent research projects of their own. They are both “essential” and “workers,” and thus should have collective bargaining rights like any other worker.

In an ideal world, no worker would need the right to collective bargaining. Everyone who labored on behalf of an institution would be fairly compensated for their work. It goes without saying that we are not living in an ideal world. The University of Maryland, like institutions of higher education across the United States, has been steadily starved of state resources, making it difficult to keep compensation commensurate with our peers and our location, which has seen an obscene surge in rent over the last 20 years. In the absence of adequate stipends and cost of living increases, graduate students are seeking the right to have collective bargaining rights so that they might collectively organize to improve their working conditions. Like most other workers, they should have that right.

It is simply untenable to categorize graduate student workers as workers sometimes, and students other times. They are graduate student workers. We must acknowledge their identities as students, learning a craft, but also as workers, doing the craft. While graduate studies have long been seen as a kind of apprenticeship, we ought not be asking students to live the life of a medieval apprentice. We ought to be thinking of ways to improve their working and living conditions. A good start would be to give them the collective bargaining rights that so many other workers in other industries have.

Sincerely,

Damien Smith Pfister

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write to support SB 118 in the strongest possible terms. My testimony comes from both my expertise as a scholar of workforce development and from my personal experience. I am a former graduate assistant at the University of Maryland, now a faculty member. During my PhD, I worked as a teaching assistant, instructor of record, administrative assistant, and research assistant. After my PhD, I worked in a corporate research lab at Microsoft. Now, I am a faculty member in the fast-growing and highly innovative College of Information Studies, supervising both teaching and research assistants. I love this University, but it will lag behind its R1 peers in places like Berkeley, Michigan, and Washington as long as it undervalues its graduate assistants.

My graduate studies were impeded by rules that changed from work context to work context. Each supervisor had different rules for starting and stopping work. One supervisor's paperwork mistakes resulted in a late paycheck that nearly caused me to cancel my wedding. Others have had it much worse, particularly international students who cannot pursue off-campus work and, because of their visa, have no bargaining power with respect to their lab leader. That supervisor can request whatever hours or duties they want, and there is no legally-binding space for negotiation. Collective bargaining would establish a set of ground rules and a transparent, enforceable system for dispute wherein both sides are valued equally.

My commitment to graduate unionization has only strengthened as a faculty member supervising graduate assistants. I cannot teach a class or run a lab without their work, and I wish there was one set of ground rules that governed that work. Their work in teaching is undeniable: PhD students are regularly instructors of record, or TA's with their own sections. Research assistants' work may seem fuzzier, but the opposite is true. Our labs cannot run without our research assistants. My RA's are not working on their "own" research; they are working on my research, on tasks that I instruct them to complete, with deadlines I set for them. This is a supervisory relationship that only sometimes correlates with an advisory relationship (e.g., in any given semester we are often looking for RA's to just complete a task, and we will not serve on their PhD committees). Any supervisor should be a good mentor, but that is true of any work context—whether it's a lab or a restaurant or a factory.

I wish for a collectively-bargained contract to govern these relationships. In supervision, I want a set of ground rules that everyone is clear on and which can be enforced by a third party. In advising, I want my students to have recourse to legally-binding enforcement so that a mistake

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from me or my peers will not hurt their careers in the long-term. Those ground rules would make my job easier and would allow me to focus on my real job: Research and teaching.

I also want a collectively-bargained contract for my graduate students because it will strengthen recruitment of their future peers. The Colleges with which mine competes for PhD students are largely unionized R1 universities: UCLA, Berkeley, U Michigan, Illinois, Cornell, and Washington. Graduate school is a significant commitment. The security that a contract offers—and the ability to bargain for matters of compensation and work duties—is a competitive advantage that those schools have and which we lack. State policy creates a work environment that prevents me from recruiting top-tier graduate students.

Finally, and precisely because many of these schools have been unionized for decades, we don't have to guess as to whether graduate unionization harms student-faculty relations. It's a well-studied question. In their classic 2013 study "Effects of Unionization on Graduate Student Employees" in the *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, Rogers, Eaton & Voss surveyed graduate students at four unionized and non-union R1 universities. They found that unionization has no negative effects on graduate student career outcomes or perceptions of academic freedom, and in some cases has a positive effect. Further, "unionized students were more likely than nonunionized students to report respect for differing opinions in their university" and unionized graduate students were more likely to agree that their advisors accepted them as competent professionals, that their advisors were effective in their role, and that their advisors were role models whom they wanted to model their careers on.

The facts are clear: The advising relationship is not harmed by unionization, if anything it is improved by it. Our values are clear: Graduate assistants make this university work, and they deserve a say in it. And my own position as a supervisor and advisor is clear: Graduate unionization would foster a consistent work environment that allows me to focus on my research and teaching in the present and recruit top-tier graduate students in the future. Please support our work at UMD by passing SB 118.

Sincerely,

Daniel Greene, PhD
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4130 Campus Drive, Hornbake Building South
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students sit in an awkward state of limbo - are we students, or are we staff? I know that my duties and those of my fellow cohort are not those of a student, yet we are treated as such by the University. The University of Maryland routinely places amongst the lowest in compensation for graduate students at R1 universities, especially when the high cost of living in the state is taken into consideration. Not only is this wholly inadequate for current Graduate Students, but it effectively creates a massive barrier to entry because there are many that simply cannot afford to live like we do.

Collective bargaining rights are the first step in ensuring that the graduate students, which are a lynchpin to the functioning of the University, are appropriately compensated. Moreover, extending collective bargaining rights and negotiating with graduate students in a fair and good-faith manner means the university can avoid potentially damaging wildcat strikes that have been observed in recent months and years at several other universities. Giving us a legal framework to negotiate for our fair share means avoiding these less than ideal situations.

Sincerely,

Daniel James Tuke
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The right to bargain collectively is a basic human right and UMD should not be afforded the right to classify graduate students as part time contract employees. As a now retired former Union official, I urge you to affirm this very critical legislation.

Sincerely,

Daniel Robson Jr.

8907 59th Avenue , Berwyn Heights, MD, Maryland 20740
brobson639@hotmail.com

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

While I appreciate the efforts that the University has taken over the years to improve the experiences of graduate assistants and other student workers, it is not nearly enough. I will not cite various income statistics, minimum income requirements for living in the DC metro area, etc. since that has been presented extensively by the multiple groups on campus organizing for improved conditions and wages. Rather, I will speak only of my experience thus far as a first-year graduate student and primarily on the issue of our salary.

I was lucky enough to receive a fellowship through my department (physics), giving me an extra ~\$10,000/yr. to bring my yearly salary to \$36,720. One of the primary reasons that I decided to come to UMD was this - or so I thought - competitive offer. Coming from Boston, I figured the cost of living was cheaper than there and UMD's offer was roughly the same as the offer I received from some Boston-area schools. However, after living here during my first semester, I have found that even with this fellowship, it is not enough.

I am not sure what goes into calculating the average cost of living, but the reality is that we graduate students pay for a lot more than just rent and food. Personally, I pay for rent, food, internet (I am fortunate enough to have my utilities like heat and water paid for by my landlord, but I know this is uncommon), my car payment, gas, car insurance, health and life insurance, books, medication, and - though this was only a problem for this year - various moving costs, such as furnishing a new apartment. Even with my higher-than-average salary as a grad student, I find that this is not enough. I have barely enough money left at the end of the month to go out with friends or my girlfriend. I have been forced to rely on some supplemental income from my parents to pay for things, which I should not have to do as a 25-year old adult with an "income." I cannot imagine with grad students with a lower income or without a safety net experience...

I know the question of the University's finances is a complicated one, but I am certain that there are costs that can be cut that can transfer money from frivolous activities to graduate workers, i.e. the people that do the majority of the research work (along with post-docs) that make UMD a top-tier university. I don't know the number for UMD, but U.S. universities tend to take a "cut" from any research grant that a professor or department receives, somewhere in the realm of 40-70%. Does UMD really need that much money for an overpriced sports program, an endless list of deans of ABC and XYZ that bring nothing to the school, and new building after new building? I am not convinced that there are no administrative costs that the University cannot cut

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to improve the lives of the force that bear the brunt of the work of what this place is supposed to exist for: research and teaching. And to any objection along the lines of "that's just part of being a grad student" I say, All it takes is one top-tier university in the U.S. to provide a competitive salary and the rest will be forced to follow suit. UMD could be the one leading the charge and become a shining example of how a university can and should provide its graduate students with a healthy, living salary.

I truly hope that this message is heard. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Daniel Spencer
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University of Maryland, College Park
4254 Stadium Dr. Rm. 2132, College Park, MD 20742
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The term "graduate student" is really a misnomer. It conjures up the idea that we simply get paid to study, get some career training done, and eventually get a free degree in the end. The reality is far different. The typically graduate student in reality spends the majority of their time teaching and/or conducting research - two pivotal roles for the University. In fact, I would argue that the University system as a whole would come crumbling down if it wasn't built on the backs of graduate students - i.e. cheap labor - fulfilling the job that are core to running a research university. In short, there would be no UM system without graduate students. Graduate students, or better yet graduate labor, deserves a seat at the table in deciding what is best for us. This power asymmetry has been further exposed thanks to COVID-19. Work has only gotten harder for us, yet the benefits have not kept up. Then again, when have they ever? It's clear that graduate students have held the University system up over the past year, not the other way around. Graduate labor teaching the classes and has adapted to the "new normal" and graduate research brings in the funding. We deserve better.

Sincerely,

Daniel Trettel
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am signing this petition and offering my testimony because I do not believe that graduate assistants are being paid livable wages. I have had to get another job and still have trouble paying rent. I cannot afford to buy food or support my family.

Sincerely,

Danielle Leizman
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
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SB 118
Supporting

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

Any large group that holds an essential role for a social ecosystem should also hold a fraction of the decision making power. Else, the system is prone to abuse without a legal counteraction. Since graduate and undergraduate assistants do hold important roles in the functioning of college campuses and are currently without the legal basis for collective bargaining rights, the system is flawed. I hope that the representatives recognize that the rights cannot be permanently denied without a response from the underrepresented populations and choose to take the right side.

Sincerely,

Danila Sokratov
Research Assistant
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Collective bargaining is an important right for workers, it allows them to negotiate contracts that protect them and are in the best interests of all. Currently, UMD grad students have the second lowest stipend of any of the flagship state universities in the country (the lowest is University of Nebraska, where the cost of living is much lower than College Park). Collective bargaining would allow grad students to present a unified front and hopefully create better outcomes for students.

Sincerely,

Declan Molloy

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Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write to you in support of SB 118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. Labor rights are fundamental to a functioning and fair society; this holds no exception in the realm of academics. Our higher education system is built upon the idea of passing down generations of knowledge for new minds to apply and expand upon. As a graduate student in the Astronomy department, I recognize the immense wealth of knowledge serving as a foundation to the work I do every day.

As graduate students, we act in the role of both master and apprentice; I have taught undergraduates in astronomy and mathematics to prepare them for wherever their futures take them, and am myself taught how to pursue complex research questions and successfully communicate that work to a broader scientific community. Although I enjoy my opportunities in both respects, I know too many students who carry the weight of extreme financial insecurity on top of these responsibilities.

This insecurity has developed over decades of ill treatment. Graduate students have been increasingly exploited with little, if any, fair compensation. Upon completing a PhD or Master's degree, students are thrown into a dismal job market already extremely competitive before being decimated by the COVID-19 pandemic. For any graduate, the economic reality of academia coupled with being extensively overworked is devastating to mental health.

This has been ingrained in the perceived culture of academia. Institutions rely on the exploitation of these workers, promoting it as a stepping stone in a veritable *cursus honorum* in tenured positions they continue to replace with more graduate positions. There is no mincing words here; this problem is driven by an increasing desire for profits over education and a disturbing trend towards business-like management of Maryland academic institutions. All of this comes at the expense of the graduate students these institutions rely on to maintain the institutional mission the State of Maryland has given them.

Passing SB 118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act is an important step in the process of remedying this fundamental flaw in our public institutions. Marylanders rely on our academic institutions to promote scholarship, invest in the future of Maryland, and enable innovation. The present environment fails to fulfill this mission to its fullest extent. Economic justice and financial security will go a long way in reversing the exploitation that impairs the fundamental mission of our university system.

Sincerely,

D. J. Teal

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

PhD, Department of Astronomy
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9044 Rhode Island Ave.
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a research assistant at the University of Maryland. I write to you today to urge your support on HB 214 / SB 658.

I request your support as the Maryland State Legislature to allow graduate students the same rights afforded to the employees of any other organization: the right to organize and the right to choose to collectively bargain. We as graduate Assistants, do a lot of work at the University and we request you to give us the right to bargain as a body, just like any other state employee. There is a lot of variation in pay among graduate students and many have taken loans just so that they can continue living healthily. I personally don't receive enough money monthly that I can pay all my bills, I have to work extra hours besides my assistantship and get assistance from my parents to be able make ends meet. Once I pay for my rental, I can't make a healthy living with those remaining money.

I am requesting you to consider supporting the legislation to allow us to bargain collectively and improve how graduate students live while carrying out important research and work at the flagship institution of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Dongze He
Research Assistant, Department of Computer Science
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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SB 118
Supporting

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

I will be teaching for the first time Spring semester 2022, and though I am new to Maryland and believe my stipend is generous I also believe that collective bargaining is a necessity for any collective of workers. This ensures that more voices can be heard and ensures power is more equally balanced. Additionally, other students may not be in as secure of a position as I am and I would like to be able to lend my voice to theirs to help them reach the security they need to focus on the important work of their discipline.

Sincerely,

Edward Daschle
Graduate Assistant, English
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I support legalizing collective bargaining rights for graduate employees within Maryland so that we can be recognized and have the potential to negotiate as full employees. Without this recognition, without any formal seat at the table, policies about graduate student employment are vague.

Vague policies such as, for example, leaving parental accommodation decisions up to “department culture” are not policies at all. At best, these “policies” leave students to negotiate their status themselves with those who control their academic and early professional career; at worst, they leave students open to discrimination because of precedent set by “department culture” that is not rooted in equality and inclusion. When pregnant with my first child, for example, I received derogatory comments (fortunately, not from my advisor!). As the first woman graduate Teaching Assistant to give birth during the semester, my department had no “department culture,” and--especially after hearing these insulting and utterly degrading questions--I battled extreme anxiety as I worked with my department to shape my accommodation plan on my own. Fortunately, my individual advisor was kind and understanding, but he was at a loss of how to accommodate the many unknowns of birth and infant care within the bureaucratic layers of the undergraduate courses that graduate students in my department teach. When I contacted the University’s ombudsman, his lack of empathy and lack of knowledge about what employment options were available in my department quickly revealed that rather than a helpful resource, conversations with him were a further emotional drain and, more practically, a waste of precious time.

Like so many other systemic problems, the current COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the inequity present in vague policies for graduate students--these vague policies create and perpetuate a culture in which graduate student workers are not provided essential resources to complete their work and their own studies/research, our two primary functions at universities. For my Teaching Assistant position during Fall 2020, I was the sole TA for an upper-level

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undergraduate course. I have two children: one was 2 at the start of Fall 2020, one was 6 months old. My baby's sitter unfortunately tested positive for COVID-19 in the second week of the semester; this news and the need to immediately begin quarantine meant we had to pull our eldest from her daycare center, which subsequently closed when my children and I tested positive. My husband and I, then, faced battling this disease within our family and caring for two young children who need constant supervision for at least two weeks while also both trying to sustain our work.

We quickly realized that in reality, the FFCRA was not so helpful; it would have allowed my husband (who had just begun a new job 1 week earlier) up to a maximum 80 hours of PTO, and myself a maximum of 40 hours. These finite numbers are not helpful because (1) your quarantine may be extended, as ours was, due to the onset date and nature of your symptoms, (2) it does not consider the continued closure of any child care center--our eldest's daycare center remained closed even after our quarantine ended, because of the different dates of exposure. As we began our quarantine, we were hesitant to use these finite hours too quickly, lest we run out and still be sick and/or without childcare.

As a graduate employee, I am afforded "time away," per the [Graduate Handbook](#). I take seriously my responsibility as a teacher--the job for which I am paid--and I am devoted to my students. As the sole TA for this course, I knew that taking formal "time away" would have a severe, negative impact on their learning, in an already tumultuous semester of online learning. As the sole TA for this course, what did "time away" mean? How was my work to be distributed? Who would do it? Who was allowed to do it? (In my department, not all are eligible to be the TA for upper-level/major-required courses.) The lead professor of the course, an adjunct, did not know...but neither did the division chair, nor members of my department's administration. On my end, as I was thrown into quarantine, battled COVID, and sought to provide my family and myself with healthful, immune-boosting meals (something that takes time and great coordination with helpful friends and family), I frankly did not have the hours, mental stability, or emotional capacity to figure out what even my department's administration did not know: the "red tape" of what "time away" meant for me, my students, and the course in this situation. I tried to stay on top of email, be available on Zoom for the required sessions, and simply survive. The result was

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that I got behind on other teaching responsibilities and was not “caught up” until mid-December; for my students, my COVID quarantine and diagnosis meant delayed and reduced feedback the entire semester. Furthermore, this experience prevented me from completing my own research and making progress on my dissertation for the remainder of the calendar year.

While COVID19 is a new--and I hope unique--situation, the phenomena of graduate student employees contracting an illness certainly is not. And yet, there are no guidelines provided to professors or departmental administrators for examples, regulations, etc. of how to handle graduate employee “time away.” My lead professor was provided with no resources, and those above her were also totally unprepared for how to provide assistance to a course without multiple TAs assigned to it. As with so many things, the pandemic has served to highlight a crucial structural flaw: not having clear policies of how “time away” may be handled for different funding situations creates impossible situations not just for students, but also for faculty and administrators.

Having the right to collective bargaining will *in itself* help to amplify and strengthen graduate student voices. University administrations will be more encouraged to make real, meaningful adjustments for graduate student employees when we have this right, even before a union is created (if one ever is). I hope you join our efforts to make possible a brighter, more equitable education system and future for us and our children.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Massey
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

By granting the graduate student collective bargaining rights, you can empower the newest members of your academic community to let their voices be heard. The struggles of graduate students - be they financial, mental, or otherwise - are well known and only contribute to the barriers preventing equal access to the highest education. Help us create a healthier and more equitable environment to advance our education and your academic community.

Sincerely,

Ell Bogat
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My name is Emery Laurel Patterson. I am a graduate assistant with the University of Maryland Library system, and I am in my final semester of the MLIS program. I am also the GA staff representative for the Library Assembly Advisory Council (LAAC) for the 2020-2021 academic year.

As a graduate assistant, I had a generally positive experience because my supervisor for most of my program, Bria Parker, was an excellent mentor. My current supervisors, who I began reporting to after Bria's departure, Sarah Hovde and Neil Manel Frau-Cortes, are both very supportive and helpful as well. This experience, however, was dependent upon the goodwill of my colleagues. I was lucky in that the people I worked with were understanding, communicative, and helpful the entire time throughout my graduate assistantship (especially during such a tumultuous time socially).

The needs of GAs are best understood by GAs, because the role tends to vary by department. As workers, we are not treated the same as faculty or staff because of the cyclical nature of the position. Communication is an area that could stand to improve for GAs, as we are often left out of the loop of projects that we are expected to work on.

Because the needs of GAs are best understood by GAs, graduate assistants need bargaining rights. They need the ability to advocate for themselves should the need arise. I am asking for the ability to voice their concerns, just as an option. It should be a tool we have access to.

Sincerely,

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining

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Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of SB 118. I believe graduate students should have the legal right to collective bargaining, should we vote to unionize.

At the beginning of Fall Semester, 2020, the department of physics assigned teaching assistantships to us. Several lab courses were run in person, meaning that a significant proportion of our graduate students would have to be teaching in person during a pandemic, else lose their funding for the semester. In-person teaching positions had no additional hazard pay, nor were the safety protocols in labs clearly communicated to us. The exception to this was students with pre-existing medical conditions, which students could use to ask the department to assign them to a fully online teaching position. For students to be forced into the uncomfortable position of either revealing their medical history, or choose between unemployment and personal endangerment was an extremely stressful situation. I myself am on immunosuppressants, and as a vulnerable member of the population it was especially disturbing that other graduate students in my department could be forced into a dangerous position. As many physics graduate students also rent rooms together in the same house, it is not enough to only allow vulnerable students to teach online, when in fact housemates could become direct vectors of transmission. Fortunately, the department was receptive to our negotiations, and with our feedback was able to allow students to teach only in positions they felt comfortable with. However, this could easily have gone another direction—our wellbeing was in the hands of the goodwill of the physics department heads. If they had simply chosen not to prioritize our voices, we would have had no legal recourse. If HB 214/SB 658 passes, university administrators will be legally required to at least consider our thoughts, and we will no longer be in such a vulnerable position.

An argument often put forward is that graduate students are simply students, not workers—every aspect of the PhD program is engineered for our own education, including teaching. This is patently false. My teaching assistantship last semester consisted of grading problem sets for around 60 students every week, which took up a significant amount of time. To those who consider graduate students not to be workers, I ask—how does grading the same introductory problem again and again 60 times a week contribute to my education? It takes time away from my own classes and research, and certainly does not make me a better teacher or instructor—I have very limited interaction with the students. Graduate students perform these essential functions simply because they must be done, and not because they become better instructors by

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grading. Anyone with romantic notions of PhD students preparing for professorship by doing teaching assistantships has never held one of these grading positions. As an aspiring theoretical physicist, as opposed to an experimental physicist, I will continue to grade throughout my PhD. If the logic that all our duties as PhD students are for our own education holds, then it follows that theorists are preparing for a heavier teaching career as professors, which is patently false. The reality is that theory students continue to teach beyond their first few years due to lack of funding for research assistants, not because we will be teaching more than our experimental colleagues as professors. Students with external funding are also not required to take on teaching assistantships—if these positions were designed for our own benefit, why would they not be required for students with funding? What are these teaching assistantships then, if not jobs to support us financially? As workers, we deserve bargaining rights—or at least the legal option to vote for it.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to have made a clear argument in favor of SB 118.

Sincerely,

Emily Kaiyin Jiang
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Collective Bargaining is one of the only ways for working people in America to stand up for their rights as employees and have real input on the safety and quality of their jobs. A workforce that can come together collectively to advocate for their well-being will be safer, healthier, happier and more productive than they would be otherwise. Graduate students are no exception, and UMD will be a better institution if their workers can support one another in this critical way

Sincerely,

Eric Tondreau

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing to you in hopes that you will consider voting in favor of legalizing collective bargaining rights for graduate students.

Three years ago, I applied to UMD's computer science PhD program at the recommendation of two of my undergraduate professors, both of whom had completed their PhD at UMD. They spoke very highly of the faculty, students, and staff; however, they also warned me that it was challenging to live on the student stipend.

Now, when prospective PhD students or faculty candidates ask me about my experience at UMD, I understand how my undergraduate professors felt. I love the people I work with, and the work I do, but our graduate student stipends are lower than many peer institutions, especially relative to the area's cost of living. During my first year, finding housing within my budget was a significant source of stress. When I discovered issues like bugs, mold, and mice in the house where I rented a room, I was unable to find an alternative I could afford. (Thankfully my circumstances have changed -- I now have additional income on top of my stipend, and I split living costs with a partner.) That experience made it difficult for me to earnestly recommend UMD to prospective students. I spoke with one faculty candidate who was concerned that our low stipends would impact their ability to recruit students. This candidate received an offer from UMD, but they ultimately went to another university.

My experience is just one point of data in a much bigger picture, but that's exactly why collective bargaining rights are so important. Legalizing collective bargaining rights for graduate students will allow us to "connect the dots" -- bringing together graduate students, administrators, and lawmakers so we can understand the bigger picture, and how to move forward.

Sincerely,

Erica R. Blum

PhD Student, Computer Science

Research Assistant and Teaching Assistant

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Despite being the backbone of higher education and research, graduate students are not even considered employees. It would be near impossible for one professor to run a 200 person lecture, meaning graduate students do vital work in their field, and therefore deserve the appropriate status and ability to make change. The bulk of cutting-edge research is done with the work of graduate students, yet being nothing more than mere 'students' does not fit our description. Graduate students must be given the proper title of employees, and the right to improve working conditions. Given graduate students collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

Erika Hoffman
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am in support of graduate assistants at the University of a maryland having collective bargaining rights since I am a single mother to two young boys. Going back to school for my masters in architecture meant that I had to quit my full time job to pursue my dreams. And while I understood the financial risk, I also decided to go to the university of Maryland due to the financial aid that was offered. The GA pay is in no way comparable to my previous salary or benefits so I just take out student loans to support my family.

Sincerely,

Erin Nivison
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am one of the lucky graduate assistants--I have a full-time (20 hr/week, 12 month) position and a decent working environment. However, my experience is the outlier, not the norm. Funding remains a source of constant stress for every graduate student I know, and some of them have had to pause or stop pursuing their degrees entirely because they were unable to continue working in the current conditions, and COVID-19 has made these situations worse, not better. I work in-person on campus, and I regularly worry that I am going to be the one to bring COVID-19 back to my household. I have seen other segments of the campus worker population exercising their right to collectively bargain and directly advocate for themselves and I support them wholeheartedly, and I believe that graduate assistants and workers should have the same abilities. Graduate workers complete essential work for this university and the university system, and to pretend our contributions are not "real work" is disingenuous at best.

My work as a graduate assistant actually has nothing at all to do with my degree program--it's not even in the same department. The work I do as a graduate assistant cannot be categorized as "academic" or in support of my course of study, it is just essential work for the university, just like other non-graduate staff workers. All of our work is essential to the continued functioning of the university, including those graduate students who work as research and teaching assistants, because collectively we make the current university system possible. As workers, we deserve the right to determine for ourselves whether or not we will bargain collectively or individually, just like all of the other workers on campus who are not arbitrarily restricted. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important it is for all workers at this university to have a process that they feel represents them fairly and that allows them a meaningful voice, and until graduate workers have the ability to collectively bargain if we so choose, we will not be fully and fairly represented in this process.

Sincerely,

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I notice that institutional discourse has dispensed with the illusion that our choice about how we feel safe holding our classes matters, and it is revealed that instructors are expected to be ever prepared to absorb the fallout from the fundamental negligence, abandonment, and individualism that have organized our experience of this pandemic. I had multiple students at the end of last semester who got covid, and had to navigate finding safe places to isolate, while moving out of the dorm for the winter, while either taking finals or making accommodation arrangements, and somehow tend to their own health and wellbeing (and the health/wellbeing of anyone with whom they share space and responsibilities of care) at the same time. A cruel and preventable situation.

As a Graduate Assistant, and therefore — by University of Maryland’s definition — not a UMD employee, my student status and attendant provisions (such as affordable health insurance, tuition remission, student loan deferment) depend on my ability to make progress towards degree completion. Even though my GA position requires fulfilling responsibilities that are critical to the operations of DCC as a program and UMD as an institution, my officially recognized relationship with the university is as a student. As students and not employees, GAs are not granted sick leave or paid time off, and cannot take a leave of absence without forfeiting health insurance, tuition remission, and student loan deferment. In the event that I, an immediate family member, or other person for whom I provide direct care receives a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, that requires attention beyond the permitted 30 hours “Time Away From Duty”, UMD’s policies state that I must rely on the goodwill, advocacy, and creativity of my supervisors and colleagues (who are being left to manage their own vulnerabilities and responsibilities of care as well) to fulfill my duties. My duties include teaching core curricular classes with syllabi that I have designed, and for which there aren’t other people available to step in and take over if I am unable to continue. So I have to absorb the pressure of choosing between my own wellbeing and the ongoing functioning of my program/my students learning experience. If an undergraduate student has a health challenge or disability, they can get university sanctioned accommodations, such as extra time or space for taking tests or note-takers. The system of administering accommodations is deeply flawed, but it does provide a protocol for students to advocate for their needs in the classroom. What accommodations could possibly exist to support graduate student instructors who need extra support or different qualities of time/space to learn, when our learning is conditioned by labor that is determined by the university calendar and departmental needs? Functionally, graduate student instructors do not have access to accommodations to protect ourselves as students, nor do we have any benefits or workplace protections as

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non-employees.

Right now we are facing so many different layers of uncertainty, and we are also hailed by the moral certainty of centering, supporting and empowering the self-determined wellbeing of those who are most endangered by this pandemic. We are in the midst of a mass disabling event and I feel unassured that the University's priorities are organized to protect the most vulnerable people. If that were the case, the initial public-facing conversation on the table wouldn't be about how the university has decided to email everyone a survey every day, develop an experimental advance warning system, have us report bio-monitoring to an unknown authority in the school, and take a responsibility pledge that requires you to buy into the University's partnership with LinkedInLearning in order to see it. We would not be receiving messages from the administration about our resilience as a community with no functional accountability in place to ensure that people are complying proactively with public safety protocols. Universities should be asking the their communities who are the students and faculty who would not be able to continue their education elsewhere, what support they require, and how to protect the livelihood of the people whose work requires them to be on campus as well as all the workers who depend on the university for their livelihood. How can the campus be a resource for those most in need? How can the university protect the economic security of the maintenance/facilities/res life/staff and faculty whose work would need to change with fewer people on campus? What is being done to protect the health and safety of maintenance, food, and emergency service workers who have to work on campus? How can Res Life and Student Services support off-campus students to have access to the tools they need to learn, and on-campus students to self-organize community for their own collective wellbeing, rather than determining it for them? I am most concerned about these questions. I haven't seen them addressed in the statements from the administration, and so I don't believe their bottom line is really about creating a safe learning environment for everyone. I am unsupportive of any measure that would ask any of us to take on that risk framed as some sort of personal choice, when we are all being coerced in various ways through the climate of unsafety produced by institutional policy.

Sincerely,

Eva Peskin
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Although thousands of Graduate Assistants at the University of Maryland teach courses, conduct research, and administer campus programs, the State of Maryland determines they are simply "temp workers", not employees, thereby denying them basic employment rights.

Support SB118, a state senate bill and grant graduate assistants bargaining rights across the Maryland university system.

As an Alumni, I'm disgusted with the labor practices supported by University of Maryland, a public institution. Collective bargaining has been a legal right for nearly 90 years. It is past time that the University of Maryland recognize these workers.

Sincerely,

Evan Papp
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

As graduate students, Teaching, Administrative, and Research Assistants are in a vulnerable position without collective bargaining rights. While these assistantships provide the necessary tuition support to complete a degree, the rate of pay is not reflective of living costs surrounding the University of Maryland. In College Park and the surrounding areas, it is almost impossible to find rooms or apartments under \$1,000 per month. With the increasing number of luxury student accommodations being constructed surrounding campus and the rapidly expanding DC metro area housing market, rental rates are ever-increasing. Finding a room or apartment at or below this rate is rare and often comes with problems that no one should have to face, and at the very least are not conducive to learning, such as mice or bedbug infestations or mold. Even the official graduate housing apartments are notorious for such issues. At current graduate student salaries, it is unfeasible to afford such rates unless students are receiving outside financial support, such as familial support. It should not need to be stated that not all students have this privilege. Collective bargaining rights would afford all Maryland graduate students the ability to advocate for living wages relative to the area in which they study.

Sincerely,

Gabrielle Robinson-Tillenburg

Ma/Phd (in progress), Art History & Archeology

Teaching Assistant

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

We ask you to support and pass SB 118, to legalize collective bargaining rights for all Maryland's higher education public employees.

My testimony hasn't changed from that last year's bill, but here it is again if you'd like to review.

I am certain you will receive plenty of testimonies from other students sharing with you the many pragmatic reasons for this that the effects of SB 658, if adopted, are to stimulate and promote Maryland's higher education, science, and technology, furthering the long-term interests of all parties involved. I am certain you will also see plenty of social proof: how collective bargaining has been adopted by other University systems in this country to great success and benefit of all. Hence, in my testimony, I will focus on ethical, moral reasons.

This country was founded on the principle of equality before the law, and on the principle that hard work eventually leads to earnings, success, and upward mobility. Over centuries, these principles were reinforced and spread about to encompass any and every minority, for this system was designed to serve the interests of all people, not just some elite class. The right to unionize and bargain terms of employment became a universally applied and recognized right...

Except in the realm of higher education, and, in particular, not for graduate employees. This is the single domain which was widely regarded as the place of privileged, white, predominantly male elite in the past, those with the financial means, proper connections, and time to spend on education and enlightenment, to earn a status symbol of high society. However, over the last several decades this domain has utterly transformed, while the outdated public perception of it, in many circles, has endured.

The graduate students of today usually come from a much poorer background. These are often single people, who traveled from a poorer country because this situation represents an opportunity and somewhat-better conditions for them. Sometimes, these are people with families, struggling to support their spouses and kids. In yet other cases, these are people who have decided to sacrifice higher wages for a number of years in the name of science and research, brave enough to face the remaining frontiers of human knowledge. The more affluent, on the other hand, often steer clear of graduate school, for it is no longer a symbol of economic prestige, and, for many, does not truly yield additional material gains.

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Yet, here we have, some of the brightest minds in our country, all having Bachelors' and some -- Master's degrees, toiling away at some of the most qualified intellectual labor anywhere in the world, for wages comparable to those of the cleaning personnel at the same institution. And they, unlike the cleaning personnel, are not allowed to unionize. How do we, as a society justify this?

For one, we say that this work they do all just part of their training, hence they don't deserve to be treated as other workers. They're "just students". Let us dwell on this point for a bit. Can you think of a single intellectual job that doesn't require some amount of on-the-job training? Does this preclude the employees' right to collectively bargain with their employer? The answers are obvious, and we are faced with a vicious double standard.

Secondly, we say that these employees are just "assistants", they just do the grunt-work. The reality is they come and "assist", from 20 to 60 hours a week, doing the bulk of both on the teaching and research fronts. Discussion sessions, laboratory sessions, office hours, grading, proctoring, and subbing for lectures are all tasks performed -- often times, solely -- by the teaching "assistants". The bulk -- virtually, all -- of data gathering, experiment design, coding and tool-building, and analysis is performed by research "assistants." Not to leave out other graduate assistants, those often do the same work they would often do in the private sector, but for a tiny fraction of the pay. And all this is leaving aside the fact that, even if they *were* some kind of low-level assistants doing grunt work, how could that diminish their role from any other employee, public or private? Again, we see a double standard, and one based on false pretenses.

Finally, there is the question of "who is going to pay for it?". Hypothetically, let us consider any other minority out there. African Americans. Native Americans. Women. Hypothetically, let us imagine they were for whatever, as a group, deprived of the collective bargaining rights of other workers. Imagine now, that someone would use, as an argument against granting those rights to such a group, the phrase "who is going to pay for it?" The simple truth is that it would go against the very principles I spoke of earlier, principles of equal opportunity for all, to speak those words. Hence, we see yet another double-standard which cannot be overlooked or justified.

To repress someone's right to collectively bargain on grounds of prospective costs is to, in effect, recognize the importance of their role, recognize that they actually *would* be able to bargain for higher wages *because* their role is pivotal, and yet to deny them this simple right, effectively oppressing them through loopholes in the legal system, in order to save a dime for the tax-payers, as well as further secure the cozy positions of University bureaucrats and lofty salaries of tenured professors.

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When you consider SB 118, keeping the points I covered above in mind, please ask yourselves how else failure to pass SB 118 can be morally justifiable, and, if it is not passed, what it speaks of us as a state and a people.

Sincerely,

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The University of Maryland system *could not* function without the labor of graduate assistants who make very little money. My graduate assistant stipend barely pays for my rent, much less my groceries. Because our employment is often tied to our financial aid packages, we do not have the option to leave our positions when we are not compensated appropriately or are treated unfairly. We deserve greater recourse for advocating for ourselves through collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

Gwen Peyton
Teaching Assistant, Public Policy
University of Maryland, College Park
5015 Iroquois Street, College Park, MD 20740
gwen.peyton4@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I write in support of the FAAC to advocate for graduate workers to have the right to collective bargaining. I write as a chaired Professor of Computer Science who has been with the university for around 11 years now, recognizing the significant value that GAs bring to our institution -- Indeed, the main reason I am employed at UMD is because of the fantastic GAs we are able to recruit. They deserve fair treatment, and allowing collective bargaining rights will improve our ability to recruit strong GA, will lead to their better ability to carry out their duties, and will lead to increased growth in the State of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Hal Daumé III
Professor, Computer Science, Institute for Advanced Computer Studies, and Language Science
University of Maryland, College Park
941 T Street NW, Washington, DC 20001
haldaume3@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Due to COVID-19, multiple supply chains have been interrupted. Inflation rate is growing at a rate that significantly increases our daily expenses. I believe almost every one will feel the same if they frequently go for grocery shopping. I will appreciate the collective bargaining rights to ensure we can maintain a standard of living.

Sincerely,

Haozhe An
Teaching Assistant
4650 Van Buren St, Riverdale Park, Maryland 20737
haozhe@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I strongly support collective bargaining rights for students; such rights make life better for them, as well as for faculty.

Sincerely,

Harold Charles Daume III
Professor, Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
919 Florida Ave NW, Washington, DC 20001
haldaume3@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to you today to urge you to support the Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act (SB 658). Collective bargaining is critical to ensuring that graduate students are not unduly disadvantaged in their employment negotiations with the university. The current system is not sufficient: it often leaves current graduate students in a precarious and vulnerable financial position and serves as a real deterrent to prospective graduate students seeking to learn and conduct research with the University of Maryland. It also breeds frustration within the graduate student cohort, who feel that they are unable to do anything substantial to help.

Graduate students serve as the backbone of research produced by the University of Maryland. Their contribution to the university's research, teaching, and administrative output should not be understated. It is untenable that the university looks to build and sustain a system that relies on underpaid labor. I understand that the university faces a myriad of competing pressures when it comes to funding; however, graduate students' wellbeing and financial security has for too long served as the issue to be traded off. Collective bargaining would ensure that we, as graduate students, can engage with the university on these issues.

The University of Maryland and, by extension, the state of Maryland stand to benefit greatly from a more competitive graduate program. The university is pushing talented and ambitious researches away by having a minimum graduate assistant stipend that is lower than all but one flagship state university in the US relative to the cost of living. I have just started my PhD with the University of Maryland in the Department of Government and Politics. I was fortunate enough to receive the generous Flagship Fellowship. Without this scholarship I would not have been able to accept my place at the University of Maryland. The stipend is not sufficient to support living comfortably in the DC metro area, which is one of the most expensive places to live in the US. There is little to no room for students to save. Collective bargaining would provide graduate students with the ability to work with the university to ensure that graduate students can build their own safety net. This would allow students to focus on their learning and research.

Sincerely,

Harriet Jane Goers

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Graduate Assistant, Department of Government and Politics
University of Maryland, College Park
3121 11th St NW, Columbia Heights, DC 20010
h.goers@hotmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

While we are students first, GAs drive the success of the academic, financial, research, and social goals established by their respective university. This bill can help amplify the voices of GAs who are supporting their university communities, while helping GAs to feel more empowered to contribute more to those communities without having their concerns be overshadowed or not acknowledged properly.

Sincerely,

Hayleigh Brianne Moore
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
12401 Brickyard Blvd, Beltsville, MD 20705
hayleighbmoore@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I believe that caring for graduate students is actually caring for the future of the public university. If we are expected to become faculty or staff at institutions around the country (or world) why wouldn't we expect to be treated with respect at the beginning of our careers. As we see more collective bargaining agreements, I believe that there is a lot of professional development that is missed when graduate students aren't a part of a collective bargaining unit. I want to go forward in my career fighting for the rights of staff and employees and I believe that starts with a collective bargaining unit at UMD.

Sincerely,

Imani Spence
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
2448 Lakeview Ave, Baltimore, MD 21217
imaniems@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of SB 118 and strongly urge the State of Maryland to recognize the crucial right of graduate students to collectively bargain. Last year, as a second-year full time PhD student my package consisted of the following: (1) taking three classes each semester as a student, (2) getting paid for 10 hours a week as a Research Assistant, and (3) getting paid for 10 hours a week as a Teaching Assistant. As a Research Assistant, I evaluated a public health initiative in Delaware providing free contraception to all women. In this role, I scheduled and conducted interviews, organized and filed data, coded data, analyzed data, and drafted conclusions and recommendations as to the success of the initiative. As a Teaching Assistant, I taught content, I led weekly section discussions, I graded, and I emailed—a lot. I facilitated the students' course experience and ensure they are receiving the appropriate accommodations if they are athletes, have a disability, English is their second language, or are just having a tough semester.

While the Research and Teaching Assistant jobs are very different, they both require high levels of flexibility because they deal with real life human beings in different circumstances. It would be detrimental to the research project for me to say, "I've already done my 10 hours for the week; I'll just do it next week." Why? Because I might lose the participant over the weekend. Similarly, it is impossible to grade and provide feedback for 40 papers within the allotted 10 weekly hours, but at the same time students expect and deserve timely and constructive response.

This year, as a third-year PhD student, I am Instructor of Record for a course I TA-ed in my first year. I now complete all the tasks that a Teaching Assistant did, in addition to preparing and holding lectures. This is an assignment that is considered a 20-hour assistantship. At the same time I am expected to work on my dissertation, and to continue working on research projects that I was previously a Research Assistant on. Should I choose to drop these research projects due to lack of time and funding, I would lose any hope for authorship on the projects that I did so much of the ground work for. Without authorship on publications, my chances of an appropriate job post-PhD plummet.

A lot is expected of us as graduate assistants, for not much pay in return. While we may request to work with a specific professor, project, or course, not all requests can be fulfilled. Even if it may not be our first, second, or third choice, we understand the reality--we are assigned to tasks that have funding. All we ask in return is to be given the right to bargain collectively to attempt to slightly level out this egregiously imbalanced power dynamic.

Sincerely,

Izidora Skracic
PhD Student, Department of Family Science
Research Assistant & Teaching Assistant
4200 Valley Drive #1242
College Park, MD 20742

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

izidora @umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

We as graduate students deserve to have employment rights. Especially international students who are not allowed to work outside of campus.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Seltzer Bekerman
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
701 Seaton Ave, Alexandria, Virginia 22305
jacquie.sb@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I have been both a GA and an hourly graduate worker (non-GA). When I was a non-GA hourly worker, I did the same amount of work as when I did receive a GA, however, I did not receive any benefits (healthcare), and I was given a much lower overall wage, not to mention that my tuition was not covered. I think it is important for the graduate students to be able to collectively bargain because not all graduate students have the same benefits.

Sincerely,

Jaemin Eun
Department of Geographical Science
University of Maryland, College Park
9106 48th Place, College Park, MD 20740

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I urge you to support SB 118 and grant graduate workers at the University of Maryland the right to collectively bargain. We are employees of the University whose labor is an integral part of its education and research ecosystem. Graduate employees are the ones doing the grading and research that allows the University to educate Maryland's next generation of leaders and to develop the next wave of innovations that will stimulate its economy. Without this labor, classes and research would grind to a halt.

Our reward is incredibly long hours, supervisors with almost total impunity in how they treat us, and an administration that misleads you about our cost of living. Currently, most graduate students are directly supervised by a tenured professor who often demands well more than 20 hours per week, up to 60 hours in many cases. The systems currently in place to handle student grievances and hold these supervisors accountable are woefully inadequate. Complaints go to a designated member of the faculty, who has every incentive to take the side of their fellow professor and who has no oversight from the student side because without collective bargaining we have no power to organize. As an example, the Graduate School claims that they recently implemented parental leave policies, but they have no mechanism to force individual supervisors to allow their students to actually take this time off.

Rather, we are left as individuals to fight against tenured professors who make 10 times our salary and who hold our careers in their hands. Collective bargaining would give weight to graduate employees' complaints and force the University to recognize our requests, unlike the current "Meet and Confer" process. The University has no obligation to contend with our demands under this framework, which has led us to the current situation.

The minimum stipend is set based on the expected "cost of attendance," which is not even reasonable based on University-subsidized services. While I already find it insulting for my pay to be based on what my employer deems the bare minimum to survive, rather than being based on the value that I provide to the University, it is further demeaning that the University-subsidized housing costs up to \$1227 a month for a one bedroom apartment, almost twice the amount the Graduate School quotes for "rent and utilities." In addition, the "health insurance" expenses that they quote are less than the cost of the University-provided health insurance premiums, and presumably do not include the costs of receiving any actual medical care.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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While my stipend in the Physics department is enough to cover my normal yearly expenses, this would not be the case were I to have any sort of accident or emergency. And for many students in other departments, their stipends do not even cover their basic expenses, meaning that graduate school, even at this public institution, is only available for people with families who can support them well into their 20s. As a result, I would not be able to get a PhD in sociology or biology here and would likely need to exit my current program were anything to happen to me or a member of my family.

I am fortunate to be interested in a field with a stipend that can cover my expenses, but I want to stand up for and fight with the graduate workers everywhere at the University of Maryland, including workers in other departments, workers with families, workers here from abroad, and workers with hostile or abusive supervisors. The only way to ensure the greatest health and well-being for graduate employees, and therefore the best education and research for the state of Maryland, is to allow us to bargain collectively.

We deserve the right to collectively bargain because we are essential employees of the University. We need it because only together do graduate employees have the power to secure what we need to remain fully happy and productive.

Sincerely,

Jameson O'Reilly
PhD Candidate, Physics
Research Assistant
7000 Wake Forest Drive Apt. B, College Park, MD 20740
joreilly@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As an alumnus of the University of Maryland in College Park, I fully support collective bargaining rights for graduate students. These students are workers and therefore are creating value for the university. They deserve to have control over their working conditions.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Mohler

3450 Elm Ave, Baltimore, MD 21211
jeremymohler@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The university and school fees should be deducted from the GA salary. Having it as added salary is hundreds or thousands of dollars in additional taxable income that must go right back to the university. Also, having half GAs only get half tuition waivers is rare amongst universities and should be changed.

Sincerely,

Jesse Moy Leong
Graduate Assistant, Music
University of Maryland, College Park
7525 Riverdale Road, Apt 1813, New Carrollton, MD 20784
jmleongmusic@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support this bill because collective bargaining operates as an effective means to address cost of living and employment concerns. In absence of these rights, student employees are unable to formally and bindingly negotiate with the university to address labor and employment issues.

UMD's minimum graduate assistant stipend is lower than every single flagship campus except for the University of Nebraska, when compared with estimated cost of living. My fellow students and I are struggling under severe financial stress while fulfilling our study and work tasks.

Sincerely,

Jingshuai Du
Graduate Assistant
3413 Tulane Dr, Apt. 31, Hyattsville, MD 20783
jingshuaidu2014@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Because of the pandemic, the professor hiring me as a Graduate Assistant brought my work down to half-time. This was not based on my performance. In fact, he wants to keep me in his employment as long as possible, but because of a lack of funding, I was demoted. Now, I'm expected to live off of \$400 every two weeks. This doesn't cover rent, let alone food, school expenses, or mental health assistance. Additionally, the removal of opportunities for employment for graduate students allows me no other option than to stay in a job in which I don't make enough money to cover basic needs.

My employer reached out to the university to see if they could help fund half of my GA salary so that I could stay on full time. Of course, they said no. The lack of care toward students is unheard of. We already are having to deal with classes that cost the same as before the pandemic with a decrease in educational value. Collective bargaining rights could help students like me keep the employment we deserve during such a trying time.

Thankfully, I've been fortunate. Others aren't even employed because the university has essentially removed any sources of funding available before the pandemic. If we can group together and get taken seriously as a group of necessary employees for the university, maybe we can change testimonies like mine.

Sincerely,

Joanna Avery
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3308 Memphis Ln, Bowie, MD 20715
joannagavery25@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I have been in management for most of my life and currently work in HR. I know that looking at students as not being employees may bring some kind of advantage to the GR function of the university but at what cost. Its inconceivable that premier State University such as U of M would hide behind draconian policies and deny students the same rights as the rest of the University employes.

Sincerely,

john McNinnie
Parent of a student
University of Maryland, College Park
1002 Berrymans Lane,, Reisterstown , Maryland 21136
Jmcinnie@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining rights. The state of academia is extremely precarious for Graduate Students right now. We are not adequately paid for the tremendous amount of work that we put in and we are not guaranteed support by anybody except by our employer which is a tenuous relationship at best. We have no power right now and there is power in a union.

Sincerely,

Johnny Monday
Graduate Assistant, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
1811 Metzerott Rd, Adelphi, MD 20783
mondayjf409@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

We Graduate Assistants of the University of Maryland system keep the gears of pedagogy and administration moving, performing valuable labor to impart wisdom, skills, and experience to undergraduate students and to assist administrators with the effective functioning of the department and the school. Teaching Assistants in particular perform the onerous task of maintaining the forward momentum of their own studies while devoting significant portions of their time every week, every month, every semester to providing a valuable learning experience to students, doing the hard work of implementing the academic strategies and imparting the intellectual content constructed and assembled by instructors of record. These efforts unfailingly exceed the maximum average numbers of hours worked (20/week) deemed allowable by Graduate School policies.

Simply put, graduate employees perform vital labor for the University of Maryland and that labor must be recognized and rewarded at a level sufficient to allow for adequate living standards. The university and the state owe us that much for the valuable work we provide to make this current model of instruction function. That we are not treated as other state employees are treated and that budgets seem to put these decisions out of the hands of administrators are problems of political will. These things can be changed if we decide to do so, but our voice in that conversation has been and is limited. We are simply demanding fair representation of our collective political will and power in a negotiation for adequate compensation for our labor. Dismissals of our right to bargain collectively that rely on the 'good sense' of resolving issues on a 'one-on-one' basis reveal that those who make such arguments know precisely how this power dynamic functions and how it serves to maintain the existing state of affairs. We maintain that this is not the case, but our desire to change those affairs cannot find expression without the recognition of the political voice that our labor merits.

Sincerely,

JP Fetherston
Ph.D Student, Department of History (University of Maryland, College Park)
Teaching Assistant
1526 Gales St. NE, Washington, DC 20002
jpfetherston@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

During these difficult times, I am writing to you from a precarious position. I have spent the last few weeks reckoning with the State of Maryland Benefits office over a clerical error. At various times I have been asked to confirm that I am a state employee. I have yet to come up with a response that satisfies. I am a state employee in some regards and not in others. I have health insurance subsidized by the state, but I cannot take paid sick leave should I need to use it. This contradiction organizes my experience with graduate student employment in the University System of Maryland (USM) over the past six years.

The inexplicable loopholes around graduate student labor has caused incalculable confusion and strife in my home department. A pregnant colleague struggled to navigate starting their TA contract a week after giving birth. A colleague caring for a disabled partner felt unable to take leave, while another liberally asked fellow grads to cover their assignments without consequence. I co-authored an article with a colleague pointing out that as graduate student employees we are mandatory reporters under Title IX. However, that role demands us to act as agents of the State of Maryland and the University without receiving full recognition and protections as employees of those institutions. These confusions are commonplace. I have been fortunate to not experience overburdensome assignments; random termination; and dangerously obtuse regulations for lab workers during COVID-19.

I urge the Members of the Finance Committee to consider not only the enormous productivity and labor that graduate students provide to USM, but also the human cost of such a large sector left in precarity. Though we contribute through our labor to the local economy, we struggle to participate in it. Low income relative to cost of living; contingent employment; and limited or non-existent leave policies have a clear impact on our fiscal and physical health.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that so many of our fellow Americans are more insecure than we knew. Granting graduate student employees the right to collectively bargain is an important component of our local, state, and national recovery.

Sincerely,

Jonelle Walker

PhD, Theatre and Performance Studies

Teaching Assistant

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

5200 Denver Dr., Galveston, TX 77551
jwalke15@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write to you today in full support of Senate Bill 0118, also known as the Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act.

As a second-year Master of Public Policy student at the School of Public Policy, I am very interested in the current implications of past policy and the potential solutions we can offer, especially when their effects loom so heavily over myself and those like me.

Not only am I a proud graduate student at the University of Maryland, but I am also a proud international student from the Dominican Republic, and although the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic recession have affected us all in numerous ways, I would like to take some of your valuable time to explain how international students have fared particularly negatively throughout the past year.

First, I must express my gratitude to the University of Maryland, and its School of Public Policy in particular, for granting me the opportunity to pursue my higher education at such a prestigious institution. In addition, it is necessary to acknowledge the privilege that such an opportunity carries, knowing that thousands—if not millions—around the world can only wish to be in my shoes.

That being said, however, my current position, which I came so grateful to be in, comes with a specific set of inherent strings attached, which in times of crisis, can be particularly taxing. For example, unlike most graduate students, whether student worker or not, international students are unable to seek full-time employment, and only under certain conditions, and after an application and approval process, can we seek part-time employment outside of our academic institutions. As you know, the current recession has caused a considerable decrease in supply in the job market, making difficult for anybody seeking to support themselves, and perhaps their families, to find employment. This situation is only made worse for international students who cannot seek employment freely.

As part of the federal government's actions to alleviate the strain of the pandemic and recession on our lives, last March Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or CARES Act, a stimulus bill worth over \$2 trillion dollars. Part of the CARES Act distributed funds to institutions, like the University of Maryland, which their students could then access; students, that is, who were not international.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Additionally, the CARES Act, also provided individuals with \$1,200 in stimulus, not including many international students, especially those who came to the United States in 2020, and, therefore, had not paid taxes in 2019. The same can also be said of the second round of federal stimulus, which included \$600 for individuals.

This is not only an issue of workers' rights, but one of looking out for the most vulnerable, those without representation, without the tools available to others to conduct change, but with the same needs as everybody else.

Keeping this in mind, it is of the utmost importance for graduate student workers within the University System of Maryland, especially international students, to be represented, advocated for, and, when necessary, have the ability to bargain collectively, seeing as our options are already slim to begin with.

Therefore, this is why I urge you to support Senate Bill 0118 in order for graduate workers to be classified as workers and grant us the right, not privilege, to advocate for ourselves, including through collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Jose M. Munne

Candidate, School of Public Policy

Teaching Assistant

440 K St. NW, Apt. 314

Washington, DC 20001

jmunne@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The argument is simple fairness: the choice to exercise collective bargaining rights provides graduate students the same basic benefits of all other UMD employees. Such rights are standard across numerous state school systems (for example, California, New York, Connecticut, New Mexico, Wisconsin, Michigan, Oregon). Moreover, for non-traditional graduate students, access to benefits such as social security and retirement plans are particularly important as they embark on the multi-year commitment to their advanced degree balanced against the cost to their family and long term finances.

Sincerely,

Joshua Chiel
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
1309 John S. Toll Physics Building 4150 Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20740
jchiel@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a Biophysics PhD student at the University of Maryland. Over the course of my time as a student, I have had the displeasure of being both a TA and an RA. In my time as a TA, I have worked 30+ hours under inconsiderate conditions, grading 80 or more papers every week, co-TAing 500+ students, having 4 office hours per week with 30+students every session, grading all midterms and finals, and having very little to no time for my other mandatory and necessary studies, let alone time to do daily human tasks such as eating and sleeping.

As an RA, I have had little to no guidance in my research from just about anyone: my advisor, program coordinator, co-directors, etc in my department, and absolutely no guidance from anyone in the school outside of my department, utmost including The Graduate School and its administrators. I have no say as to my work conditions as a TA and RA, and therefore have had horrid mental health and consistent thoughts of suicide due to working long hours for very little pay.

I have talked with a myriad of peers, all of whom have had similar experiences as myself. If I were to choose another school, even one more disheveled as the University of Maryland, yet had more say as to my working conditions and collective bargaining, I would choose that school in a heartbeat. Frankly, I would choose most any other school to do my graduate studies than the University of Maryland, and have told multiple prospective students this. It is unfortunate that after a year and a half, this is how I view the university that I had so much hope for when starting.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lucker
Research and Teaching Assistant at various times
8916 60th Avenue, Berwyn Heights, Maryland 20740
jlucker1@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a PhD graduate student who has held many roles at the University of Maryland College Park. In my experience as a TA, RA and simply as a student, I believe our resources are taken advantage of. The COVID - 19 pandemic has exasperated these issues by loss of funding and unsafe practices of making students go to labs in dangerous situations. I support the unionization of graduate students like me because we need to be protected.

Sincerely,

Joy Shen
Graduate Assistant, Department of Mechanical Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
10817 Game Preserve Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20879
Joy.Sh.Shen@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As an international student, I have several concerns about the cost of living and taxes in the USA, specifically in the DC area. Even though we receive a stipend, it is not enough for a nontraumatic experience in graduate school. Specifically, COVID-19 has increased the prices of several items, which are almost impossible to cover with our stipend. I would suggest looking at the salary and cost that we, international students, have. You will probably find that we cannot pay a decent health insurance, nor a good transportation system, among other fundamental items.

Sincerely,

Juan David Gelvez Ferreira
Graduate Assistant, GVPT
University of Maryland, College Park
6108 42nd Avenue, Hyattsville, Maryland 20781
juan.gelvezf@gmail.com

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

As a person who worked as a student researcher at another university, and with friends and relatives who have been in similar positions, I know how hard graduate students work, as teachers, researchers, and much more. Nowadays, with the tremendous debt so many are shouldering, not to be able to bargain collectively like other campus workers for proper pay and working conditions is an injustice that must be ended by permitting these indispensable workers to organize in a union.

Sincerely,

Juliana Barnet
Community Member, tax payer, former campus worker organizer
University of Maryland, College Park
4108 32nd Street , Mount Rainier, MD 20712
julianabarnet@gmail.com

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a third year PhD student in the Neuroscience and Cognitive Science (NACS) program at University of Maryland, College Park, and I am writing to you in support of SB118 – granting collective bargaining rights to graduate students of the University of Maryland system. University of Maryland has an exceptional record in science innovation, and I am very grateful to be part of this scientific community, but it is necessary to acknowledge that the backbone of this exceptionalism comes from the hard work of graduate researchers and teaching assistants. By being denied a seat at the table when it comes to policies impacting graduate students, the state is telling its indispensable graduate students that they are not valued.

During my time at UMD, I have made significant contributions to two different R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which have brought millions of dollars to the university. Through this work, I also provided pilot data that enabled our lab to recently be awarded another R01. Moreover, I have spent countless hours training undergrads in neuroimaging methods, which has served to augment the education they received through their classwork. Despite my contributions to UMD's exceptionalism, my graduate stipend has remained under the NIH standard, which is meager for the cost of living in the area. Giving collective bargaining rights to graduate students would facilitate more equitable solutions for everyone at the university.

On a personal note, I am step-father to two elementary school aged children who are simultaneously in awe of the work that I do, yet negatively impacted by the financial cost that graduate school has had on our family. Little things like mandatory fees due each semester slowly eat away at our ability to live comfortably. While I am not expecting professional level pay, I would like the means to voice my frustrations about such policies that the administration is likely unaware of. Opening up dialogue between the policy makers and the graduate students who are impacted by these policies will only serve to improve the university overall. I truly hope that you take a proactive approach in recognizing graduate student workers as workers, and pass the SB118 collective bargaining bill.

Sincerely,

Junaid S Merchant, MS
PhD Student in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science (NACS)
Research Assistant, Psychology Department
13276 Musicmaster Dr, Silver Spring MD 20904
merchantjs@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a fourth year PhD student and parent, and I am writing in support of legislation that would grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students of the University of Maryland system. University of Maryland has an exceptional record in science innovation, and I am very grateful to be part of this scientific community, but it is necessary to acknowledge that the backbone of this exceptionalism comes from the hard work of graduate researchers and teaching assistants. By being denied a seat at the table when it comes to policies impacting graduate students, the state is telling its indispensable graduate students that they are not valued.

During my time at UMD, I have made significant contributions to multiple grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which have brought millions of dollars to the university. Through this work, I also provided pilot data that enabled our lab to recently be awarded another R01. Moreover, I have spent countless hours training undergrads in neuroimaging methods, which has served to augment the education they received through their classwork. Despite my contributions to UMD's exceptionalism, my graduate stipend has remained under the NIH standard, which is meager for the cost of living in the area. Further, we have been told that if we obtain grant money from external sources, that our health and dental benefits are forfeited. Thus, something that would be a net positive not only for me as a researcher, but also for the university, becomes disincentivized. Giving collective bargaining rights to graduate students would facilitate more equitable solutions for everyone at the university.

Beyond the specific case of University of Maryland, the challenges faced by graduate student workers reflect broader societal issues that are negatively impacting the country as a whole. The pandemic has shed light on how rampant income inequality has become, and a growing number of workers in all sectors, including graduate student workers at numerous other institutions, have started organizing. In many cases, this has led to costly strikes and negotiations that have resulted in bad publicity for the institutions unwilling to provide just means to its workforce. By providing bargaining power to graduate students, the University of Maryland system could stand out as a shining example of what an equitable graduate working class can look like. This would also serve as a model for higher education in America which is suffering a "brain-drain" as a shrinking segment of the population wants to join the institutions that once led innovation globally.

On a personal note, I am step-father to two elementary school aged children who are

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

simultaneously in awe of the work that I do, yet negatively impacted by the financial cost that graduate school has had on our family. Things like mandatory fees due each semester slowly eat away at our ability to live comfortably. While I am not expecting pay that is commensurate with competitive industry positions, I would like the means to voice my frustrations about such policies that the administration is likely unaware of. Opening up dialogue between the policy makers and the graduate students who are impacted by these policies will only serve to improve the university overall. I truly hope that you take a proactive approach in recognizing graduate student workers as workers, and pass the collective bargaining bill.

Sincerely,

Junaid Salim Merchant
Graduate Assistant, Neuroscience and Cognitive Science Program
University of Maryland, College Park
13276 Musicmaster Dr, Silver Spring, Maryland 20904
merchantjs@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I want to support collective bargaining rights as a current graduate research assistant specifically on increasing the stipend. The rent in DMV area is high and food is getting way more expensive since the Covid started. I want to be able to support my basic needs, so I can focus on my research.

Sincerely,

Jung-Jung Lee
Research Assistant, Department of Education
University of Maryland, College Park
4646 40th St NW STE 200, Washington, DC 20016
jungjungle24@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Kraina Sarah E. Ostrach. I graduated from the Master of Library Science (MLIS) program with the College of Information Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park in May 2020. From August 2018 to August 2019, I served as a Graduate Administrative Assistant for the deans of my college.

I consider myself lucky because I did not experience many difficulties in my position, though I was distinctly aware of not having any infrastructure upon which to rely should problems arise. Although my official supervisor was the dean, we only met twice during that year. Instead, I worked with his executive assistant to discuss the details of my position, duties, schedules, etc. All of this information was informally discussed in person or over email; there was no codified contract or document outlining my duties, expectations, schedule, etc. While I am grateful that my time was respected, I must emphasize that I experienced anxiety feeling as though I had no protections should the requirements of my position change. And although I had an amicable relationship with the deans with whom I worked, I was distinctly aware of the hierarchy between us and never wanted to do anything that could jeopardize how my work or I was perceived. Indeed, I once burned myself on my way to work and ignored the injury, still trying to arrive on time. As I walked from my car, it became obvious I needed medical attention and could not perform my duties. My superiors were understanding and patient as I made a stop at the health center - but I am frustrated that I even thought I should try to go to work first. But that is what happens when there is no clear protocol for such situations.

I would like to reiterate that my experience was generally a positive one, but only due to the individuals with whom I worked. Should my superiors have demanded more of my time or changed their minds more frequently - which has happened to my classmates, and even to myself in an hourly campus position with absolutely no formal delineation of duties - I would have had no recourse to protect myself. The anxiety caused by this situation was exacerbated by the positions of my superiors as the most senior administrators in my college. In addition to taking pride in my work and wishing to do a good job, I was also concerned that any conflict or other situation could have serious repercussions.

I urge the legislature to give graduate students the right to collective action - give them a choice. The anxiety I experienced while working as a Graduate Assistant is unnecessary and negatively affects students' ability to pursue their studies and work. The difficulties that my classmates have experienced with ever-increasing duties, erratic pay schedules, and changing deadlines are unprofessional, unfair, and extremely detrimental to academic pursuits and even mental health.

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Graduate school is stressful enough. Employment where the goal posts are ever-shifting, or could shift without notice, is an unnecessary source of stress and hardship and is relatively easy to fix: give students the right and power to demand contracts, a clear list of job duties, and clear protocols for the common situations that arise while working.

Sincerely,

K. Sarah Ostrach

MLIS, College of Information Studies

Graduate Assistant 2018-2019

9303 Chanute Drive, Bethesda, MD 20814

k.sarah.ostrach@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing to you to urge you to support SB118 to afford graduate assistants the same rights as employees of any other organization: to organize and to choose to bargain collectively. We are, in deed if not in name, employees, and we deserve the same protections as other classes of employees, which are not guaranteed to us as students.

I consider myself exceedingly fortunate in that I have not had to take on additional work outside of my assistantships during my time as a doctoral student; however, that is due to the fact that my spouse earns substantially more than I do and provides a financial cushion we would not otherwise have. The \$18,000 annual stipend I was offered upon acceptance to the University of Maryland -- the state's flagship campus -- is not enough to live on as an individual adult. Certainly it is not a fair wage for the work I have done and the qualifications I hold, even when factoring in tuition remission and other benefits.

For the past year, I have held an assistantship under the guidance of kind and accommodating supervisors. They have respected my time and studies and have sought to provide me professional development and support. Other graduate students are not as fortunate in their work circumstances, but such differences in our experiences should not be due to chance, the whims of supervisors, or the fact that acting as instructor of record only counts as a "half-time" assistantship, forcing graduate students to choose between their own time and the quality of instruction they provide to other students. We all deserve fair and just wages, respect for our time, and access to hospitable working conditions, which are not guaranteed to us as students but could be guaranteed to employees through negotiation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Karen Feagin

Ph.D., Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership

Graduate Assistant

111 Lee Ave. Takoma Park MD 20912

karenfeagin@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I have enjoyed academic, financial, and professional privileges in my roles as both a graduate assistant and a teaching assistant within the Maryland School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation (MAPP). Yet, I have also experienced the following challenges:

- 1) Being paid at an incorrect and lower level than was stipulated by my “contract.” I was disbelieved by one MAPP administrator before being shamed by a faculty member for pressing the business office to correct their mistake;
- 2) Having my healthcare mistakenly terminated in June of 2019—due to the error of a MAPP administrator—during a month where I had undergone a major medical procedure. I was later asked to “remain calm” when no one could answer whether I needed to pay the thousands-dollar bill I received, whether my procedure could be retroactively covered, or even **if** my health care coverage could ultimately be restored;
- 3) Being initially denied payment for work completed during a supplemental hourly appointment, the contract for which had been signed by a MAPP administrator who later decided that “double-dipping” appointments is, apparently, “against policy.”

The result of these experiences has been financial insecurity, limitless anxiety, and antagonism and mistrust between myself and several of my program administrators. The right to collectively bargain does more than offer student-employees the promise of a potentially more stable future: it provides us legitimacy under the law to assert our interests and prevent our exploitation, whether that exploitation is intentional or not. At their best, institutions such as the University of Maryland can provide a safe space for ideas and experimentation—two things the state of Maryland needs in order to remain at the leading edge of innovation across multiple fields. But a bureaucracy that cannot be trusted to take care of its most valuable asset—students—does not deserve the power afforded by the status quo.

In closing, I support SB 118 and urge you to do the same. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kari Nye

Master of Community Planning Student ‘20, MAPP

Graduate Assistant, former Teaching Assistant

618 Venable Avenue

Baltimore City, MD 21218

nyekarinye@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students deserve a living wage and right to organize considering the expenses they incur and the responsibility they bear in teaching and research. As a former GSA, I appreciate their commitment and value.

Sincerely,

Karyn Pomerantz
Alum, ischool
University of Maryland, College Park
6038 WESTCHESTER PARK DR, COLLEGE PARK, MD 20740-2835
pomerantzkaryn6@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing in support of SB 118 regarding collective bargaining rights for state personnel. I am a PhD student at the University of Maryland. As a graduate assistant, I take courses and pursue my own independent research projects, while also working on research projects for my advisors to satisfy the requirements of my funding. I am also expected to attend conferences and submit my own work to conferences and journals. I supervise undergraduate research assistants, mentor an undergraduate writing an honors thesis, and support undergraduates as they apply to graduate school. The work my fellow GAs and I contribute to our labs, departments, and the university is vital to the functioning of the university. Graduate students fortunate enough to secure their own funding (thus obviating the need for a GA position) lose access to the employee health insurance, which many students (myself included) rely on to support their families.

I have been fortunate enough to have very supportive advisors. This is not the case for all students. A GA's employment supervisor is often also their academic advisor. That means that in the event of an employment dispute about the GA's work, their only recourse is to talk to their advisor, whose support is crucial to the student's advancement in the degree program and their post-graduate employment success. Escalating a dispute beyond the advisor risks damaging the advisor-student relationship, putting the grad student's success in jeopardy.

As a new parent, I have been disappointed in the university's lack of support for graduate student parents. The current parental accommodation policy provides six weeks of "reasonable and appropriate" accommodations. This is an oxymoron, as six weeks is neither reasonable nor appropriate, especially since the nature of these accommodations is left up for the student to discuss with their advisor. The university recently opened a new childcare center, but tuition for the infant classroom is almost \$2,000 per month, with no scholarships or discounts for students. That's more than 80% of what I make.

Collective bargaining would give graduate students the ability to negotiate fair wages and employment policies so that they can be more effective students, researchers, mentors, and instructors. We need to be able to advocate for university-wide policies to protect all student workers. Student parents should be eligible for parental leave that is commensurate with that afforded to staff and faculty and we need to be able to bargain collectively in order to achieve these changes.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Sincerely,

Kathleen E. Oppenheimer
Graduate Assistant, Hearing and Speech Sciences
University of Maryland, College Park
9104 Bulls Run Parkway, Bethesda, MD 20817

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Providing more financial support can only help our teaching and studying, as low finances often puts unnecessary and undeserved stress on graduate students / TAs during a time which is meant to be focused on schooling.

Sincerely,

Kathryn
Graduate Student, Department of English
University of Maryland, College Park
10107 Baltimore Avenue apt 4209, College Park , Maryland 20740
Kateykaroly@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I was fortunate enough to be funded by my PI's grant for my first 2 years of graduate school and was not required to teach. In my 3rd year, I was funded by an administrative GA position, which I really loved and felt gave me insight into another side of academia. As a 4th year student, I'm now being funded as a 10-hr GA (same as my 3rd year) and 10-hr TA (I really wanted teaching experience and fought for this. I feel that my experiences have been valuable, but frankly, they do not pay enough. Throughout my 3.5 years of graduate school, I have always worked multiple side hustles to supplement my stipend even though I planned not to work during grad school. I'm in my 30's working on a PhD in a field that I'm very passionate about, but it seems absurd that in order to make ends meet, I also have to babysit and bartend. I try to prioritize school and I live a modest lifestyle, but realistically, I cannot support myself on my stipend without working additional jobs. My stipend was secure/consistent throughout the pandemic (I'm grateful for this), but my supplementary jobs have been affected. My husband owns an event space/restaurant, which has been heavily affected by the pandemic, and my bartending gig is much less lucrative than it was before the pandemic. Even though I have a partner, we are now just hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. Aside from financial stress, we have also had to postpone our wedding and family planning. It's all a lot and I'm used to working on weekends and investing in my education, but the stipend that we receive is not sustainable. UMD prides itself on encouraging diversity but I know very few grad students who do not have family financial support or a partner who can carry their financial burden. Please provide us with an actually living wage, or if you cannot, please acknowledge/be understanding in your policies of students who need to supplement their income in other ways.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Yee

I'm a PhD student and this semester I'm funded as a TA and GA for separate positions, Human Development and Quantitative Methodology
University of Maryland, College Park
338 Prospect Place, Apt 4I, Brooklyn, NY 11238-4018
kat.yee15@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing in support of the state of Maryland legalizing collective bargaining for graduate students within their university system. My concerns are aimed at relatively stagnant and low student wages in the context of massively inflated costs of living in the areas surrounding the university, particularly in the city of College Park. This disparity has pushed graduate students, like myself, to seek housing outside of the immediate area to be able to afford housing. This would be less of an issue if UMD-CP maintained a robust infrastructure to provide student transportation from outside the immediate College Park area, however in recent semesters (<https://dbknews.com/2021/08/31/shuttle-um-umd-commuters-gaithersburg-bus/>) the University's transit body has eroded their service to the degree of stranding students in neighboring counties. Particular to my own discretions, collective bargaining would enable graduate students to negotiate the following.

1) Higher wages commensurate with the inflated cost of living in the areas surrounding the University.

and

2) Increased funding for UMD's transportation body to enable the hiring of more bus drivers and expansion of bus routes to neighboring counties and towns not directly adjacent to the University.

Sincerely,

Kenneth McAfee
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8279 Paint Branch Dr., College Park, Maryland 20742
kmcafee1@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

UMD student employees are critical to the functioning of the university. Despite this, out of all top 10 schools we get compensated the least relative to local cost-of-living. This seems to me patently unjust. We should have more of a say in this.

Sincerely,

Kevin Zhang
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3427 Tulane Drive, Apt 22, Hyattsville, MD 20783
kevin.wenfa.zhang@gmail.com

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students only earn unlivable wages from the university. Spendings should only be done after careful and meticulous calculations. As far as I'm concerned, my salary can only afford local bottom-tier apartments, which will take half of my income. I don't have any other choice of living because I can not afford it.

Sincerely,

Kezhi Kong
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
406 Ridge Rd, Apt 6, Greenbelt, MD 20770
kong@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

When I first received my offer from UMD I was exhilarated. Getting my PhD from an institution of that caliber was really important for me to flourish and develop professionally. I soon realized though that my stipend doesn't go very far. From the 19k that I started at, I had to pay taxes, approx. \$700 for the most affordable health insurance plan, \$1100 for registration fees, that kept going up every year, and \$350 for parking. I was literally left with \$15,000 to pay rent in College Park, that was close to \$1k/month. I ended up having \$3k left for my yearly expenses. AT a meeting with our dept's chair we were told that the university advocates that our tuition remission counts as salary. I interestingly enough, the university considers us high-paid employees while we are barely able to make ends meet. At the same time we are expected to perform at the highest level to our students, who expect high-quality education from their "professors". I support bargaining rights so the University will prioritize its people who work on a daily basis to provide education to their students. That is why universities exist, for educational purposes, not to spend millions on new football stadiums, or new hotel complexes where its own employees cannot afford to approach.

Sincerely,

Konstantinos Pozoukidis
Graduate Assistant, ENGL
University of Maryland, College Park
334 E Main Street, Apt G09, Newark, DE 19711
cospoz@hotmail.com

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

As a graduate student assistant at University of Maryland (UMD), I am writing to you to express my full support of the Fearless Student Employees and ally organizations in our efforts to obtain collective bargaining rights.

The labor of graduate assistants is essential to the daily functioning of the university system. We are a cornerstone of the work that makes UMD enduringly renowned for academic and research excellence. As such, it is vital to the continued success of these institutions that graduate student employees are afforded the most basic of rights that guarantee our safety and security.

The endeavor to secure these rights has been waged for years. The financial precarity wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic serves only to underscore the absolute necessity of these basic protections. It is high time that our ongoing efforts are met with their targeted result, one that carries the wide support of graduate student employees, faculty, and campus groups.

Please demonstrate your commitment to the essential labor of graduate student employees.

Pass SB118 to legalize collective bargaining rights for Maryland's graduate assistants.

Sincerely,

Kristopher Pourzal

Ph.D. Theatre and Performance Studies, School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies

Graduate Assistant

2810 The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

University of Maryland, College Park

kpourzal@umd.edu

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to express my support to the Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining right. I am a third year Ph.D. student in the department of Physics, University of Maryland. Graduate Assistant being underpaid is not an uncommon thing in the United States. While many states in this country had ensured the collective bargaining right for grad students, it is absent for Maryland, one of the most developed states in the US. Without my explanation and evidence, how the labor Union had helped protect the rights of workers is a known fact and there is no reason such right is not protected for graduate workers. As an important group of the university, graduate student workers ensure the quality of teaching and research of the university. We worked hard but we kept struggling to live. The right of graduate workers cannot rely on gestures of the university admins just like the right of workers cannot rely on gestures of the capitalists, even the working conditions are great now. Our right should be protected by the law and therefore we sincerely hope it will be the case. Please accept my sincere apology for sparing your time to read the letter.

Sincerely,

Kwok Lung Fan
Graduate Assistant, Department of Physics
University of Maryland, College Park
2117 Physical Science Complex, College Park, MD 20740
fkt8356@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

UMD has for many years taken advantage of graduate students, paying them below a living wage. My wage is so low (about \$19k), as a DC resident and UMD student I have lived below the poverty line (of about \$26k). Unlike UMD, DC has recognized the precarious and dangerous position my employer (UMD) has put me in, and has forced the taxpayers and others to pick up UMD's slack in the form of Medicaid and Food Stamps. UMD recognizes neither my health nor my right to eat nor to pursue my studies without an empty stomach. Such a situation is not only irresponsible on UMD's part, but offensive--my labor is valued so low as to be paid measurably beneath the poverty line. Recognize our labor! Recognize us as human beings! Let us afford to eat!

Sincerely,

Kyle Bickoff
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
1115 G St SE, Apt 1, Washington, DC 20003
kyle.bickoff@gmail.com

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I demand, for myself and my co-workers, the right to be able to hold an election for the purposes of establishing a collectively bargaining unit like virtually every other state employee.

Sincerely,

Kyle Pruitt
Teaching Assistant, History
University of Maryland, College Park
2844 Saint Paul Street, Apartment 3, Baltimore, MD 21218
kpruitt@terpmail.umd.edu

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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate student workers are essential workers. Their work produce a lot of value for the state university system and for the state overall and should be recognized for the work they do. They do a significant amount of the teaching and research. Providing collective bargaining rights for graduate students will help insure that this important work force is fairly compensated and protected so they can continue to make their contributions to our community.

Sincerely,

Landry Horimbere
Graduate Student, Department of Physics
University of Maryland, College Park
907 Philip Powers Drive, Laurel, MD 20707
landry.horimbere@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a member of PTK faculty at UMD, and formerly as a Grad TA here, I have engaged in numerous, failed efforts to win bargaining rights for PTK and GA employees in this state. We need them because we unprotected, at-will employees.

For example: During Covid, like many others, I have worked many many hours each week over what would be considered a FT work week. But our contracts do not protect us from this. No one will pay us for this, or even thank us in particular. But unlike tenured, staff, or other regular employees, we get no leave or comp time. My annual,two-semester contracts = one 91/2-month contract. I spent most of my unemployed, UNPAID two and a half summer months in 2020 taking UMD and Zoom training programs to help me increase my online teaching effectiveness. I SHOULD NOT HAVE NEEDED TO SPEND THIS TIME AS AN UNPAID VOLUNTEER! UMD has no way to provide me comp time or pay for this.

Like GA students in this state, PTK staff need union representation too.

Sincerely,

Laura Suzanne Gordon
PTK
University of Maryland, College Park
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lsgordon@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining. I work very hard to provide for the state of Maryland by contributing research and teaching efforts towards the University of Maryland at college park. However my efforts Feel unrecognized at times considering the very low pay wage of graduate assistants. It is my duty to uphold the high reputation and dignity of the university however this becomes difficult when we are being burnt at both ends Without proper recognition. The COVID-19 pandemic has extended my degree at least one year as I could not conduct the research necessary to complete my doctoral degree. I am therefore having to back finance and reach out for additional loans to accommodate for basic needs such as housing and food while working over 60 hours a week.

Sincerely,

Lauren Eagan
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I work at the University of Maryland in a 20 hour/week position through the office of student activities, which actively promotes student well-being on campus by providing programs and services that bring together the campus community. Through this position, I am afforded a graduate stipend of \$28,000, which does not cover basic living expenses in the college park area, nor the large majority of the DC-metro area. However, this part-time work is needed in order to compensate for daily expenses that I accrue as a student, which I am pursuing to better the education systems in our country that will lead to economic and social development. However - the question is posed - why is it made so difficult to do so? Shouldn't our country and state want to incentivize students? Isn't this how a society develops? Simple changes such as recognizing employee's rights such as this measure are part of the incremental process that will pave the way towards equitable development. I implore you to support collective bargaining rights for student workers as it supports students, our community, and state.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Haavik
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Graduate student workers are workers, and have the same needs and rights of employees in other settings: healthcare, time off for illness, housing, fair compensation, etc. But because we're treated by the law as students first, we often have trouble fulfilling those basic rights. For example, we often don't find out about our teaching assignments until the last minute - and that can make simple problems like securing a lease on an apartment a nightmare when we don't have proof we'll be employed in a few months or any way of providing evidence of income. (I had problems with this just last summer.) Classifying GAs correctly - as employees - and supporting our right to collective bargaining rights would go a long way towards addressing this kind of unstable, precarious arrangement.

Sincerely,

Leo M Johnson
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The yearly stipend from UMD is relatively lower than similar universities such as Ohio State, UT Austin, etc., while living cost based on the location of UMD is vastly higher than Columbus or Austin.

This situation makes the student employees experience huge financial difficulties, especially for international students.

One example would be: the housing cost. Normally a 1B1B apartment in Columbus would cost for about 1000 dollars, while apartment with the same quality in the metro DMV area would cost 1800 to 2500, which is dreadfully higher than Columbus.

I would like the university to also consider that during the pandemic, student employees are facing the stress from academics, family, workloads, and future job market. Living in such difficult situation has impacted my personal mental health severely, and I am seeking medical therapy at the beginning of 2022.

Sincerely,

Liangjun Shi
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing this letter to urge you to support SB118.

As a first year student and graduate assistant, I support this bill because collective bargaining will begin to address the egregious gap between our stipends and the cost of living within the DC metro area. As a middle school educator, I am apt at making a budget stretch, but our current employment system is not sustainable. I chose the University of Maryland to begin to envision a world for my students, but I cannot focus on my studies if I have to focus on surviving in this area.

Maryland would join some of the top-ranking universities who have established the right of collective bargaining for student workers. I call upon your sense of justice and equity to support SB 118.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Allen

PhD Student, Applied Linguistics and Language Education,

Graduate Assistant

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University of Maryland

College Park, MD 20742

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

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

Collective Bargaining is essential to fair, equitable, and inclusive practices in higher education. As a fourth year PhD candidate, I have struggled to come up with rent, money for groceries, and gas while engaging in some of the most cutting edge research that directly benefits society. Without collective bargaining, higher education may well see brilliant scholars and minds choose different career paths because the money and benefits are unable to provide a livable wage in an area with a high cost of living.

At this time, I am forced to take on additional employment so I can simply pay my bills. Doing so puts undue stress on my mental and physical wellbeing. I live in continual fear of not being able to make ends meet. This is a solvable problem if the State were to grant us Collective Bargaining rights.

As a Graduate Assistant, I teach classes alongside faculty (contingent and permanent) who receive significantly more compensation per class hour than I do. This is no way to encourage students to pursue higher education and continue to do the research that is essential building a healthier, more robust society.

Sincerely,

Lindsey R. Barr
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

In my experience, the university treats graduate students like students when it is convenient, and employees when it is convenient, always in such a way that benefits the institution rather than the students. As an example, the university treats 20-hour per week graduate assistants as “full-time,” because the rest of the time they are “students,” and then claims that their nominal hourly pay rate is quite decent, even though it is barely, if even, livable in the area. Graduate students are the lifeblood of a research university, and the institution should support them with a true living wage. If the institution cannot or will not do so of their own accord, then graduate students ought to be able to organize on their own in order to obtain the support they deserve and need. For these reasons, I support collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

Lucas Butler
Associate Professor, College of Education
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to support the the passage of SB0118, allowing graduate students to legally decide whether collective bargaining is best for them.

This right would validate two key aspects of graduate student work and experience. First, it would recognize that graduate students do valuable work, contributing to the financial well-being of the university and their fields of research, and second, it would recognize that "learning happens everywhere" (including on the job) and that while graduate students provide valuable and highly skilled labor, we are learning both formally and informally. By recognizing the reality of graduate students of today as workers, we as Marylanders can position ourselves for a future in which the leaders of tomorrow have learned to recognize the the rights workers.

I work and study in a STEM department and field, and it is well known that there are not enough US citizens and permanent residents pursuing advanced degrees in these fields compared with the current need. A major reason for this is working conditions, which Americans with STEM undergraduate degrees can avoid by instead pursuing jobs in industry. This gap is filled by international graduate students, many of whom have fewer options. This avoids addressing the problem itself and is, at best, a short term solution. All graduate student workers deserve better.

I am fortunate to do work I love together with nurturing and skilled mentors, teachers, and peers. However, loving one's work does not mean that one should not have the opportunity to collectively bargain together with other workers.

I currently work on two projects that directly impact Marylanders. One of these arose in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Given the contributions of graduate student workers like me to the State of Maryland, there's simply no excuse to deny the right to collectively bargain for reasonable living conditions and fair compensation for these contributions. I look forward to seeing SB0118 enable a better, brighter future for our state and our public universities.

Sincerely,

Lydia Stamato

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Graduate Assistant, Department of Information Systems
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120 N Rose St., Baltimore, MD 21224
lstamato@mailbox.org

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am a second-year, second-semester master's student in Library and Information Science, with a focus on Access Services and Data Librarianship. I am also a graduate assistant in the UMD Libraries' working in User Services. I do the work of a staff member and I am lucky that my department director and supervisor feel the same; I feel valued. I support collective bargaining for this reason: I want all of the other graduate assistants to feel secure in their work position. We all have enough stress between completing coursework and work assignments, worrying about having all of that taken away with little cause should not weigh us down. There is the additional issue of equity across assistantships to ensure that graduate assistants are not overworked and are given clear expectations from the beginning. Collective bargaining is about coming together to fight for all of us at the same time.

I felt called to submit testimony because I have seen two sides of the graduate student experience: caring only for myself and being the sole support for two people. I got married this past year and my partner has not been legally allowed to work since July 2019. I have been the only person in my household with a paycheck. Because of our situation, I also have to pay for health insurance for both of us, reducing my income even further. That stress combined with immigration, coursework, and completing my unpaid field internship has made these few months difficult. I would not have been able to complete my degree without my assistantship and its meager salary keeping us barely above the poverty line. My reality exists in stark contrast against the perception of graduate students as young people, dependent on parents, living by their wits and loving it. This has not been my experience, nor the experience of anyone I have met in my program. The out of state tuition for the University of Maryland is exorbitant and the requirements for qualifying for in-state tuition are unattainable for a post-graduate population that can't be geographically bound due to an already over-saturated academic market. There is no good solution right now, just the bandage of tuition remission covering the gaping wound of the cost of living, \$1,000+ semester fees, and now required health insurance. The argument that graduate assistants should get additional work ignores several things, namely time, resources, and legality (specifically for student visa holders), and does not question why graduate assistants should have to have secondary (or tertiary) positions to make ends meet. Collective bargaining will not solve this problem immediately but is a means for graduate assistants to work together in a meaningful way without fear of retaliation from the administration.

Sincerely,

Margaret Rose Hunt

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Master's Library and Information Science, College of Information Studies
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I'm writing in support of SB 118 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. I am lucky to be a PhD student in Entomology, in a department and lab that generally value my mental health, ability to maintain work-life balance, and ability to support myself during my studies. Having this kind of support lets me focus on my work instead of being worried about whether I'll have time to do it all or whether I'll have enough money to support myself. It lets me take joy in my research and classes. I can see the impact of our typically good working conditions in my fellow graduate students, and it's been backed up yearly by surveys where Entomology has some of the highest satisfaction evaluations of all departments.

But the thing is, this really is just luck. I know that these supportive working conditions aren't true for all graduate students at the University of Maryland. Without the ability to collectively bargain, our individual circumstances are left up to luck in having progressive PIs and department heads. This means that so many graduate students are dealing with the arduous and exploitative dynamics widespread in academia. These conditions don't make for better teachers and researchers. They make it hard for us to flourish and do good work.

Writing from the perspective of a healthy working environment, I firmly believe that allowing collective bargaining, allowing graduate students to negotiate for healthy working conditions, is win-win for UMD and for graduate students. When we can achieve the fair working conditions that all people deserve, we will flourish.

Sincerely,

Maria E. Cramer

PhD Student, Department of Entomology, CMNS

Research Assistant

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

Hello, I would like to begin by saying I enjoy working for the university but did not know when I began that I would not be considered an employee. I moved from another state after finishing my Masters degree, where I worked for the institution while being a student; I was considered an employee at my previous institution. Upon accepting the offer at the University of Maryland to earn my PhD and work for the university while I attended, I was very excited. I assumed that since I was able to get health insurance and received weekly paychecks that I was an employee. I found out the hard way I was not.

Last summer, (2020) I accepted a seasonal position but unfortunately, due to COVID-19, I lost my job. I did not have summer funding from the university or a back-up job and was relying on my summer job to earn one fourth of my income for the year. After losing my job, I applied for unemployment but encountered issue after issue. First off, the Department of Labor and Unemployment was IMPOSSIBLE to reach and when I did speak with someone they had no idea what was wrong or told me something different every time. I applied May 31st, when my role at the university ended, and to this day I have not received a penny from the state.

First, I was told it had to do with my last job in North Carolina and quickly applied for unemployment there but found out I was ineligible for unemployment as I hadn't worked in NC for a year. Then I was told I did not have sufficient work history. I had no idea why they would say that--I worked for the University of Maryland! It was not until contacting a Maryland State Delegate that I found out I was not considered an employee. I had no idea this was even possible and proceeded to speak to unemployment and the university about the issue. They led me in circles until I was able to speak with someone (through email, no one was willing to tell me in person) and they told me I was a student who received a stipend. I found this out in September, 4 months after applying for unemployment. Administrators and faculty do not tell students they are not considered employees and I believe this should be illegal.

Under the CARES Act I should have received Unemployment from the State of Maryland. Individuals with insufficient work history legally qualify for unemployment due to this act but to this day the State has been unresponsive and refuses to pay me a cent. I spent countless hours calling people, waiting on hold this summer, working part time jobs, stressing out about finances, and trying to figure out the situation. No one at the university (except other grad students) seems to care or want to help students in my situation. To say I am furious about this situation would be

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

an understatement. I am lucky to split my bills and housing with my partner (who also lost his job during the pandemic) but if I lived alone during the pandemic I would have been unable to afford rent and basic necessities. As someone who came straight from completing their Masters and has never worked a full time job before, I do not have substantial savings to live off of. However, I no longer have the energy or time to debate with unemployment about my situation and aside from getting a lawyer, I have no other option but to accept defeat. This means I will not receive back pay or the \$600 of weekly unemployment I deserve.

I design and teach my own class at the university yet I'm not considered an employee. I am called "professor" by my students who look up to me and expect their instructor to be a legal employee. Over the past 6 months, I have debated leaving the university due to the stress and agony I experienced this past year. Unfortunately, it is difficult to find a job in the economy right now and I do enjoy my role but I often question if it's worth it. When prospective students ask me about my experience at the university the first thing I mention is this issue. I discourage individuals from attending full-time and working for the university, especially if they are relying on it as their sole source of income. We are not undergrads who can rely on our parents for money (even many undergrads do not have this privilege), we are adults trying to earn a living while working towards a degree that we will use to better the world. Even if we could rely on external sources for income, that adds to our stress levels and is no excuse for denying us the right to Collective Bargaining.

It is time for the university to improve working conditions for graduate students and prove that our hard work is valued. Without graduate students, the university would not be able to provide several classes and operate at the standard it does. As a graduate student who teaches and works for the University of Maryland, I am in full support of Collective Bargaining Rights.

Sincerely,

Marissa Sariol-Clough
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing in support of collective bargaining rights for graduate student employees in the State of Maryland; I urge you to pass SB118

I have been a faculty member at the University of Maryland College Park since 1988. I just stepped down from directing my department's undergraduate Bachelor of Arts program in American Studies for ten years. Our Ph.D. students provide most of the lower level coursework for our degree program. I cannot consider them instructors-in-training or apprentices. Many of our graduate assistants teach every facet of our courses, just as I do as a professor. They create their courses, select the readings, write the syllabus and determine the course calendar. They prepare and teach every class session. They hold office hours to help students succeed in their courses and they do a lot of informal advising. They create all of the assignments and do all the grading, work out the grading scale, and turn in the grades at the end of the semester. They have persevered through this awful pandemic where online teaching increases their workload dramatically and where they have extended care and concern and resourcefulness to help their students learn. Their work to teach their classes is identical to what I do as a tenured professor, so they are clearly employees, like I am.

While graduate assistants function as employees, they are treated like second class citizens. This starts with their low stipend. In a humanities department like mine, students teach 1-2 courses a semester and they often can't teach during the summer. Their stipend for the year is \$17,980, below poverty level for our region. In the humanities, students are not working as part of a grant-funded team so their stipend is not supplemented by monies from a grant. \$17,980 is their total income and they are not expected to take on any additional employment to make ends meet. The average rent in our area is upwards of \$1000/month, so the stipend doesn't stretch to maintain students adequately with a healthy diet and enough money to cover their books and expenses. A UMD Dining Services survey completed in 2018-19 found that 25% of our graduate students are food insecure. We suspect the percentage has gone up since the pandemic took hold in our region.

In addition, graduate assistants are often put in the situation where they have no workplace rights at all. They can be asked or manipulated into working more than their maximum (for fulltime GAships) 20 hours a week. They often have no recourse to protest this kind of exploitation because their work supervisors also have control over their progress toward the degree and toward the kinds of opportunities that help them build successful credentials. They often choose to suffer in silence rather than risk losing their GAships or angering professors or administrators who have control over their graduate student careers.

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In most departments on campus, graduate assistants perform crucial work that enables students to get the courses they need to graduate on time. Our grad assistants teach excellent courses and provide important mentorship to undergraduates. I know this because my administrative position for the past ten years was the complaint department for dissatisfied students and I hear the praise and testimonials that our undergraduate majors pass along to me...and very little criticism.

Graduate assistants—whether they are teaching, administrative, or research assistants, enable our universities to move students through to completion of their degrees, assist units to manage their workload, and professors to supervise life-changing research programs. The university could not meet its obligations to the State of Maryland without these crucial employees.

Permit me a last anecdote. Last March, one of my students looked to be in ill health and fainted while walking across the campus. It turned out that her pallid demeanor and fainting spell (not the only one) was caused by extreme hunger. Her family had had extra expenses—a car repair and a required expense for a child in public school--and she did not have enough money for food, once the expenses were paid out of her meager stipend. It is important to remember the sacrifices our students are making for their educations. Our grad students are human beings: daughters, sons, mothers, sisters, fathers, brothers who work hard at their jobs and hard at their studies.

For all these reasons, graduate employees need and must have collective bargaining rights. They are critical workers on our campuses and they deserve a stipend they can live on, dignity, and the means to report and remedy exploitation. I urge you to please support SB 658.

Sincerely,

Mary Corbin Sies

University of Maryland Faculty, Department of American Studies

University of Maryland, College Park

24 Lakeside Drive, Greenbelt, MD 20770

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Unionization does not hurt the relationship between graduate students and their faculty supervisors; it makes it a professional relationship. Faculty and university administrators who claim that if graduate students unionize it will change the fundamental "mentoring" relationship between graduate students and faculty ignore the fact that graduate students at some of the most elite graduate programs in the world are unionized and have been for many years. Moreover, graduate students at University of Maryland are woefully underpaid. UMD ranks lowest in the Big Ten, when salaries are adjusted for cost of living. It is a blot upon the reputation of UMD that many of its graduate students are forced to live at or below the poverty line just to get graduate training.

Sincerely,

Matthew Miller
Roshan Institute for Persian Studies, School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write in support of SB 118, which would give graduate student employees in Maryland Universities the collective bargaining rights they deserve like all Maryland state employees.

At every stage of university life, graduate employees are vital to the success of Maryland universities.

Take, for example, the high retention of students that the University of Maryland, College Park boasts (95.2% of first year students according to January 2019 information). This is due to graduate instructors like me. I teach at least 38 students a semester in a public speaking course. I take the time to connect personally with each of my students to ensure they feel heard, seen, and recognized amidst a crowd of almost 30,000 undergraduates at UMCP. While faculty lecture to 300 students, graduate employees make sure each student understand the content and go into the world ready to develop fearless ideas.

This continues in every corner of the university: Curriculum is revised at the granular level based on graduate student research, design, and feedback. Academic departments run like a well-oiled machine because of graduate employees in administrative positions. Laudable accomplishments from faculty across campus are made possible by graduate research and teaching assistants. Some of those graduate employees are even the ones making headlines for their laudable accomplishments.

We may be learning by doing; we may love what we're learning and doing. But this is not A reason to not give an employee the rights of an employee. Without graduate employees, this university would crumble.

If Maryland wishes to continue to boast its strong university system and compete with private universities and other prestigious state universities, it must focus on retaining graduate students. The first step to honoring their work is by giving them bargaining rights so that supervisors and employees can negotiate fair working conditions, especially hours and pay.

I urge you to support this bill so that graduate employees across the great state of Maryland can continue to develop fearless ideas and fearless students under fair conditions.

Sincerely,

Matthew Salzano

Ph.D. Student, Department of Communication

Graduate Teaching Assistant (Instructor of Record), COMM 107: Oral Communication

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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Over the last two years I have been at UMD, prices of everything have continued to go up as normal and even with a cost of living adjustment, pay has not increased enough to keep up. I am in the physics department, which pays better than most of the other programs, and can still barely make ends meet with nothing left over to save. Other departments literally do not pay their student employees enough to cover the cost of living in college park.

Sincerely,

Max Trevor
Research Assistant, Physics
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Collective bargaining rights benefit everyone. They provide much-needed community, formalized processes for various problems, and help stem the great tide of worker burnout, isolation, and disillusionment. Having collective bargaining and unions in place also serve more abstract (but essential) goods like workers feeling that their work has dignity and is meaningful. Organization means affirmative duties to one another as workers, and helping the powerful make informed decisions that retain employees.

Sincerely,

Max Wiggins
Graduate Assistant
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants for the betterment of employment conditions, wages, and ensuring job security and rights.

Sincerely,

Md. Tarikul Islam
Graduate Assistant
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

There is no reason as to why your graduate students, who are some of the most vulnerable during the pandemic, should even have to explain why we don't deserve to be exploited and deserve to have control over our means of production. Not to mention we have been exploited while risking our lives because schools are open with the highest numbers seen of COVID-19. Some of your graduate students study the effects of structural violence, commodification, infectious diseases, and all the issues associated with a capitalistic mindset. It is an utter failure when you encourage us to study these things without looking at your perpetuation of the problems we face and deal with every single day. Without graduate assistants, most schools would fall apart. We strive in our own classes to have to also manage classes of our own while struggling to eat. It is not only UMD's job but UMD's duty as said in their mission statement to provide us excellent service....hold up your end of the deal. The time has come.

Sincerely,

Melani Harden
Teaching Assistant, Department of Anthropology
University of Maryland, College Park
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hardenmelani@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students across departments receive vastly different treatment and funding. While none of us are out to bankrupt our department, it is ridiculous that many of the extremely qualified educators pursuing higher ed degrees have to look to other departments (mostly STEM fields) for funding they can make a living off of.

Sincerely,

Melanie F Hardy
Graduate Assistant, Department of Teaching, Learning, Policy and Leadership
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The ability for graduate workers to advocate for ourselves through collective bargaining is a fundamental step in improving our working conditions. Graduate workers are essential, as universities increasingly rely on us while tenure positions are being removed. Because positions in our academic fields are disappearing, there has never been a more pertinent time for graduate students to participate in collective bargaining: we do this not only to help preserve our safety, security, and livelihood, but we also do this to help the next generation of graduate students who face an even more challenging future in the world of academia. Collective bargaining would lay the groundwork for the future of academia: if we want to retain talent and ensure high quality university education for the next generation, the right to collective bargaining is not only necessary, but urgent.

Sincerely,

Melissa Davis
Graduate Assistant, Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
University of Maryland, College Park
1349 Kenyon Street NW, Washington, District of Columbia 20010
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

The contributions of graduate students to the university are vast and significant. Indeed, without graduate students much of the work that allows the university to function and be successful would not be performed. For example, while instructors provide lectures to the students at-large, they have minimal one-on-one interactions with their pupils. In contrast, teaching assistants like myself lead bi-weekly discussion sections, prepare problems and activities for students, administer quizzes, proctor exams, and grade mountains of work. Additionally, while professors secure funding from various government agencies and industry partners, it is the research assistants that deliver the promises this funding is contingent upon. Similarly, many metrics for the quality of the university are a function of its research contributions, which are quantified by publications, patents, and citations. It cannot be understated that scoring high in these areas depends upon graduate students' ability to perform quality research.

Thus, there is an obvious throughline between graduate student wellbeing and university quality, and there is an obvious connection between wellbeing, wages, benefits, and working conditions. Viewed in this way, it is only reasonable that the agents responsible for the success, quality, and essential daily operations of our institution, i.e., graduate students, be allowed to negotiate the terms of our employment, and therefore quality of life.

Sincerely,

Michael Rozowski

Ph.D. Applied Mathematics & Statistics, and Scientific Computation, Department of
Mathematics

Teaching Assistant

8307 Patuxent Ave, College Park, MD 20740

mprozowski@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a full time doctoral student in Mathematics Education with two small children. I receive a full stipend along with some extra financial awards from the College of Education and I would not be able to support myself, let alone my children, if it were not for my partner's income (that of a public school teacher).

As a secondary education supervisor, I perform an essential function for the University of Maryland's College of Education. Without my services, the College of Education's MCert Interns (Teacher Candidates) would not receive the support and guidance in their field teaching placements they need to become competent high school math teachers. I also work with several professors on a National Science Foundation-funded research project, and help maintain the Center for Math Education's website, among other responsibilities. This is all in addition to taking 10 (doctoral-level) credit hours of courses per semester and caring for a two-year-old and a six-year-old.

I understand and appreciate the fact that I am receiving part of the compensation for my labor in course work. However, my labor is essential to the functioning of the College of Education and, as a laborer, I have no representation or voice. I am told how many hours my work will take each week--an estimate that frequently falls well short of the mark--and I am not paid enough to live. If it were not for the love and generosity of my partner, I would not be able to continue my career as a graduate student.

If the University of Maryland seeks to uphold and preserve its reputation as a progressive, inclusive, and human-centered institution, it must allow its graduate students to collectively bargain for their labor. If it instead continues to unilaterally extract un- and under-paid labor from its graduate student population, the University will publicly declare its own hypocrisy and the emptiness of its progressive claims.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael William Krell

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Graduate Assistant, Department of Teaching, Learning, Policy & Leadership
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a graduate assistant at UMD College Park and also an international student. Since I am not able to legally work off campus, it is very difficult for me to live only with the stipend I receive, especially since I do not get any funding during the summer. Also, my department does not offer undergraduate classes, so all our GAs work administrative jobs, that do not have to do with our field and will not help us be competitive in the job market upon graduation. Having bargaining rights would mean that we could possibly negotiate higher stipends and assignments that are relevant to our careers.

Sincerely,

Micheline Wilson
Graduate Assistant, Second Language Acquisition
University of Maryland, College Park
4322 Rowalt Dr, College Park, Maryland 20740
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

As a faculty member in the computer science department at the University of Maryland, I interact with graduate students every day as my students, my mentees, my research assistants, my teaching assistants, my colleagues, and my friends. Without graduate student employees, I simply could not accomplish my research and teaching goals. Graduate students do much of the work that supports the hundreds of millions of dollars of external research funding the university receives each year, and much of the work that leads to the research breakthroughs and awards that the university is justifiably proud of. Graduate students also do much of the work that allows the computer science department to scale up the undergraduate curriculum to support continually increasing enrollment, even while the number of faculty available to teach classes in the department has not increased.

However, graduate students are not treated and compensated in accordance with their critical role in university life. Our best-paid graduate students in computer science receive about \$27,000 per year, which is significantly below the living wage in Prince George's County and significantly less than in many graduate programs, even those in locations where the cost of living is substantially lower than here in Maryland. In fact, it is comparable to the salary I received as a graduate student more than 10 years ago, in a much less expensive location. Empowering graduate students to negotiate for living wages -- and for compensation commensurate to their enormous contributions to the university -- is the right thing to do for the students, but it will also improve the university's ability to attract the best and brightest new students.

Salaries are not the only important issue for graduate students. Our traineeship model for PhD students has many wonderful benefits, including the ability to build close working relationships, as well as lifelong collaborations, between advisers and advisees. But it also creates structural risks of exploitation, because advisers have significant power over their students and few checks on their authority. Empowering graduate students to negotiate working conditions will add equity to that relationship and ensure that graduate students are treated as the valuable employees they are. This balance can help to ensure that a good-faith mentor-mentee relationship can thrive.

Graduate students are at the heart of the university. I strongly support their right to collectively bargain, enabling them to protect their rights and build the kind of security that can springboard long-term success. SB118 is not only the ethically correct choice, but also the practically correct choice, to maintain and increase the long-term strength of the university, and I strongly urge you to support it.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Sincerely,

Michelle L. Mazurek, PhD
Associate Professor, Computer Science and UMIACS, University of Maryland
5236 Bredan Iribe Center
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing this letter to you to urge you to support SB 118. My name is Mireia Toda Cosi and I am a Ph.D. candidate and a student representative at University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Supporting the bill is taking a stance for our rights. It is asking to allow students, those who so choose, to bargain for our own wages and working conditions, a long overdue matter. The impossibility to do so, belittles our role in the university in comparison to other state employees, who already enjoy this and other rights. We, graduate students, are a vital part of the success of the university, and even its faculty. We are at the core of this symbiotic relationship that produces top-notch research. Even when our administration repeatedly attempts to ignore our concerns and needs, students never cease in their efforts.

Current wages are heavily dependent on the individual departments, which are not allowed to go below a minimum. However, said minimum is scarcely over \$20,000 per annum at UMCP for a 9.5 months appointment. For an international student, that means an after-tax monthly pay of about \$1700. From this pay, \$1631 (with an extra \$250 if you are an international student) revert back to the university in fees. This yields a negative balance at the end of the year. Personally, my year closed with a negative balance of \$2000 despite my thriftiness. This translates into a whole month of pay being taken away. Not only that, but the luckiest student finds a reasonable rent for \$700, while many pay far higher prices. The pay is in exchange for an alleged 20 weekly hours of work. On this salary, students also have to study full-time, research, and publish. If that were not enough, 20 hours can become more with the little control there is over the duties carried out by Graduate Assistants.

This situation results in many students taking up side jobs, and requiring more time to graduate. It is common to come across graduate students working 2-3 jobs; that is if they are even in the position to do so. International students are not allowed to work outside of campus, much less on top of the 20 hours a week. The meager pay and the lack of opportunities over the summer leave students forlorn, incapable of making a living wage. It is a never-ending attempt of staying afloat. This situation hinders our academic careers, also harming the university's own success. What company would benefit from distracted employees?

Being able to bargain our own wages would allow for an open dialog with the university, and for students to regain the power and respect other employees enjoy. It would improve the mental and physical well-being of our student body. Not only that, but it would yield a positive impact on the work produced at the university. In turn, it would render more benefits and save costs to the institution in the long term (e.g., reducing the need to provide counseling).

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Thanks a lot for your attention and consideration. I hope that my testimony has helped provide insight into the beneficial impact of the bill upon both, the student body and the institution itself.

Sincerely,

Mireia Toda Cosi
Ph.D. student, Second Language Acquisition
Administrative Assistant
4605 Clemson Road
College Park, 20740, MD
todacosi@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am extremely concerned by the lack of bargaining rights for graduate students. The work we do is essential, especially during COVID. TAs are often the only people able to give students individual support and learning accommodations that make UMD College Park such a successful school. Even though TAs are essential, our position is very precarious. Though I love my job, I'm very aware that it would take just one manipulative professor to force me to work more hours that I'm contractually obligated to. If that were the case, I would need bargaining power to get my proper compensation. Wage stagnation is also a major concern for me. My wage is just barely livable, and I'm worried about the cost of living increasing over the next 5 years I'm in College Park due to gentrification. I love this school, but I came under the pretense that I would get a degree without debt. If I had to choose between continuing a degree at a deficit or getting a more lucrative job in industry, the choice would be simple. In conclusion, collective bargaining rights would make my sense of security, both economic and emotional, much more concrete.

Sincerely,

Mollie Shichman
Teaching Assistant, Department of Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a graduate assistant with the marketing communications department at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland, College Park. I fully submit this effort to unionize so we may use the power of collective bargaining for our rights.

Sincerely,

monis khan
Graduate Assistant, Business School
University of Maryland, College Park
3711 CAMPUS DR, COLLEGE PARK, MD 20740
monis222@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am 34 years old and I recently left a career at Microsoft to conduct research in artificial intelligence as a graduate student at the University of Maryland. I am married, have a young daughter, and my salary as a Teaching Assistant is slightly less than what I pay for my daughter's daycare. Despite that, I love this work and I am proud to be working on problems with the potential to benefit society and national security. This is my job; it is a hard, meaningful job, but it is not paid like any of my previous jobs. I knew that going in, and my situation is fortunate enough to allow me to have made this choice. So the situation is a good news story for me, but it is not a good news story for the University of Maryland. The University of Maryland is falling behind in competitiveness.

The University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of Illinois all have graduate student employee recognition, and the University of Maryland is last in the Big Ten for graduate student pay compared to cost of living. I made the choice to leave industry for research, but not everyone makes this choice given the incentives that are stacked against them. Work in industry is undoubtedly important, but I would love to see employment in national security research and future innovation research stand a fighting chance against employment at Facebook or Twitter. The University of Maryland is a treasure of which the state should be proud, and granting graduate student workers full employee recognition will only make it stronger.

Sincerely,

Monte Hoover

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monte.b.hoover@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I think that Graduate Assistant are doing a lot for the university of Maryland communities (faculties and students). I believe that we should have the right to social security benefits and others thing that we are not granted right now.

Sincerely,

Myriam Cisse
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3420 toledo terrace, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

Members of the legislature, I am writing to you to ask that you support SB 0118. I am an alumnus graduate research assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park campus. As a native Houstonian and transplant to the DMV area, the shock of higher cost of living with minimal pay differences from University of Houston's main campus was not lost on me. Where I was able to afford a car and gas to commute long distances within the Houston area, I am yet to be able to afford multiple trips into Washington DC, at a mere 7 mile distance, in my five years in the DMV.

I am writing to you to ask your support for this bill as collective bargaining offers an effective means to address not only cost of living and healthcare concerns, but most importantly, fulfilling employment rights and responsibilities of student employees. When research and graduate assistants do not have a way to formally and bindingly negotiate with the university to address labor and employment issues, they are unable to contribute productively to not only their employer, but society at large. This is evident from multiple studies that have shown that at least one-third to half of PhD students suffer from mental health challenges [1][2]. SB 0118 would reduce student worries and thus, mental load, stemming from lack of official duties, financial and healthcare concerns. This additionally ties in to not only maintaining a healthy workforce but also retaining talent within the nation, limiting brain drain to other countries, furthermore, ensuring that national security is not compromised.

Many of my old and new colleagues have already testified to the details of damages, mental or otherwise, incurred as a result of lack of worker's rights in the University student employment system. I hope that I was able to make a clear and direct connection between having an educated, healthy pipeline of innovators to ultimately, the safety and security of our nation. Your support of SB 0251 is paramount to the future of our country and I urge you to vote in favor of it.

[1] E. Pain, "Ph.D. students face significant mental health challenges," *Science* (80-.), Apr. 2017.

[2] K. Levecque, F. Anseel, A. De Beuckelaer, J. Van der Heyden, and L. Gisle, "Work organization and mental health problems in PhD students," *Res. Policy*, vol. 46, no. 4, pp. 868–879, May 2017.

Sincerely,

Naila M. Al Hasan

PhD, Department of Materials Science & Engineering

Alumnus Graduate Research Assistant

1119 12th Street Apt B

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I think the income is comparable to the schools in low-expense areas. So the stipend is not quite enough for us.

Sincerely,

Nan Zhang
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
Benjamin building, College Park, Maryland 20740
nanzhang@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I have been a PhD student at UMD for 7 full semesters now. I was a TA for 3 semesters and an RA for the other 4. Each TA session involved teaching 2 groups of 25 students each. I was required to lead 2 lab sessions each week- a total of 6 in-person hours- and grade lab reports, sit in office hours, as well as attend lab prep meetings weekly. On occasion, I would also be asked to substitute for other TAs or faculty members who were unavailable.

Although I was paid during these semesters to be a TA, I would describe this work as filling only about half of my allotted time at work. Every TA in my department also has to make progress in their research, and (in the initial few years) take several courses in their research specialization. So there are a lot of responsibilities, and they are not mutually reinforcing. It is very difficult for a TA to ask a potential advisor for more time to complete a research task because they have to spend all night grading exams or lab reports for the class they are teaching. On the other hand, if their advisor decides to terminate their position in the group for any reason, or withdraws advisory support, there is nothing a TA can do about it. TAs are dependent on advisory support not only for career advancement (and that dependence is almost complete), but also for things like maternity leave and childcare leave.

Given how much TAs and RAs contribute to the academic program at UMD, having some form of collective bargaining agreement to provide basic worker protections is the least that should be available to grad students

Sincerely,

Naren Manjunath

PhD, Department of Physics

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write today respectfully urging you to support SB 118. I am a second-year PhD student at the University of Maryland, College Park, in the College of Information Studies. I'm also a student representative for the Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee (GAAC). I care deeply about the success of my university and the wellbeing of all students, staff, and administrators, and so I care deeply about this bill, which would grant us GAs the democratic right to collectively bargain and have a say in our workplace.

There are many reasons why I support this bill and why I believe others should as well. First, it has been 20 years since the 2001 legislation banning our right to collectively bargain, and many attempts have been organized since that time. The meet-and-confer process that was established in lieu of collectively bargaining rights does not work. Issues such as unlivable wages, unregulated hours, lack of childcare, unclear job expectations, insufficient grievance procedures, workplace abuse, harassment, and exploitation, disproportionate rates of mental health issues, and the lack of other basic workplace protections and support systems still persist. The administration has not been responsive to these issues, falling behind other universities that treat their GAs better. The first step to remedying this is to grant us the legal protections and rights that other employees get at universities in the United States.

These issues not only affect our ability to teach, learn, and research, but it also affects the entire institution and USM mission. Lack of stability, living wages, child care, and more negatively affects the educational experience of undergraduates at UMD, as well as our competitive rank with other universities who are unionized, like University of Michigan, and the ability to recruit new talent. I often get asked by prospective PhDs about stipends and collective bargaining rights, and it's clear from decades of research that stronger employee and collective bargaining rights lead to more worker stability, health, and wellbeing, and thus better teaching and research outcomes.

Stability is key for any individual and group to perform, and right now we desperately need a legally binding democratic right to collectively bargain for that stability in order for us GAs to feel supported, valued, dignified, and be able to conduct our teaching and research to the best of our ability. As someone whose work is dedicated to social, racial, and political justice—studying social, ethical, and political dimensions of technology innovation and society—I honestly believe that this bill is a step in the right direction. So I thank you for considering this bill, and I

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urge lawmakers to support this bill that would give GAs a voice in creating a dignified, equitable, and supportive workplace and living conditions for all GAs.

Sincerely,

Nate Beard
PhD Student, iSchool
Research Assistant, GAAC Representative
4161 Fieldhouse Drive, Patuxent
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

In order for a fair relationship between the graduate students and the university, I believe the students must be able to have as much of a voice as the administration itself

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Ryan Fried
Teaching Assistant, CHPH
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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SB 118
Supporting

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

It is absurd how GAs' breaks (e.g., lunch breaks, sick leaves) are not officially guaranteed in the GA policy. Because GAs are not recognized as employees and we have unclear job expectations, I literally had to work from 9am to 5pm having only 20 minutes of break one day, and I was asked to make up my work hours when I requested sick leaves. My supervisors said that I should take my lunch break time aside from my work hours, as I do not have employment rights. Also, there was one day when the university sent out an email to inform the university employees to take a break. My supervisor mentioned that I should not take a break from work because the university system only sent out that email to university employees. I did reach out to the school ombudsperson to seek help, but he essentially told me that other GAs are going through worse times (and he did not seem surprised by all the episodes I shared with him). It is disheartening that GAs cannot have basic employment rights and yet are asked to do so much work.

Sincerely,

Nayeon Yang
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair SB 118
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair Supporting
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I would like to express my unconditional support of SB 118 and to implore the members of this committee to support it as well.

I presently serve as a Graduate Assistant (GA) at the University of Maryland's Anthropology Department. As a student/employee, the capacity and definitions of my duties are often ill-defined and seemingly boundless. My responsibilities at any given time can include a combination of teaching, mentoring, research, data entry, administrative work, travel, fieldwork, peer review, editing, conference preparation, and more; all of which is solely covered under my graduate stipend without consideration to the amount of hours logged or the quality of the work provided. It is not an anomaly for a GA in my department to perform their graduate duties akin to the approach of a full-time professional job, and for younger grad students, this is in tandem with a rigorous course load.

A prominent example of how rigged this system is against graduate students is the discrepancy between paid hours and worked hours for 9 month assistantships. The law requires that we are paid as "part-time" researchers/TA's during the school year (Sept – May), receiving pay for only 20 hours per week. In my department and across the graduate school, our advisors expect, nay demand that we work more than that for our various projects, so it ends up being closer to 40-60 hours per week. Because we do not have a system of organizing, graduate assistants have no serious recourse of accountability for advisors that exploit the free labor of their pupils, nor do we have the ability to obtain compensation accurately to the true amount of labor we provide. All of this has drastic effects, severely weakening our resolve as a group and damaging our personal lives and mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic has also presented new challenges for our relationship with the university, often forcing us to be flexible beyond what would be considered reasonable labor obligations. Graduate students deserve the right to effectively advocate for ourselves and to work at our universities with dignity and prosperity, which can only be truly achieved through leveraging our shared interests as a collective body.

The University of Maryland and all public graduate programs in this state would not be able to operate without the labor of its graduate student workforce, and as such, we deserve the ability - as all working members of society do - to organize on behalf of our collective interests. Year after year, we secure a vast array of monies and accolades on behalf of our respective universities; and yet, despite our significance, this institution has stood in the way of our capacity to achieve a fair standard of living and an equitable shake of the resources obtained as a result of our labor. I believe wholeheartedly that through acquiring the right to collectively bargain and formalize our labor through a 3rd party representative, that graduate assistants, the academic community, and the entire State of Maryland will benefit as a result.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Sincerely,

Nicholas Galloway
Teaching Assistant, Department of Anthropology
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
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SB 118
Supporting

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

I write to you today from a place of privilege, I am Graduate Assistant for the Department of Resident Life, I am pursuing my Masters in Higher Education and have very good experience with both departments as a graduate student . As you discuss the proposed bill, please consider that my experience is not that of the majority and often times does not represent many of the graduate student employees. I felt the need to provide my testimony today because history has shown us that testimony from those who stand to gain the most from change can be overlook due to questions of validity. It is easy to not understand the impact of overworked and undervalued assistants as the results of their work is mostly apparent at an individual level. As an assistant who is valued and pushed to growth both professionally and personally, I understand the importance of being able to self-advocate for your needs, and in turn the needs of those who you serve. I strongly urge you to support student rights for self-advocacy through collective bargaining as not only does it provided graduate students with the voice they deserve but also allows the needs of education and progress to persist. Teaching assistants are the backbone of education and undergraduate students seek their support in their educational endeavours. Without the ability to self-advocate, graduate assistants are often overwork and simply do not have the capacity to properly serve the student population. I want to make it clear that this is not a cry for help, but rather a request for a seat at the table. Graduate Students have earn that right, all I am asking is that you honor their work.

Sincerely,

Nick H. Velasquez
Graduate Assistant, Department of Resident Life
University of Maryland, College Park
2602 Kinderbrook Ln , Bowie, MD 20715
nickjhv@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

One of the most difficult things about being a graduate student is the feeling of not having a voice. In the face of peers who are having a tough time or working amongst faculty who can sink your career if you set a foot wrong, it is difficult to feel that what we say matters. This is why I support collective bargaining rights for graduate students. It will give us a voice in what matters.

I have to have another job to live with a reasonable standard in academia. Many of my friends don't have that, and need to rely on a family member or partner just to pay rent. This shouldn't be. Collective bargaining lets us fight for a living wage without having to be beholden to whether or not the department or our advisor simply decides if we deserve it on a case-by-case basis.

I hope you will consider voting in favor of collective bargaining rights for graduate students.

Sincerely,

Noel Warford

PhD, Computer Science

Research Assistant and Teaching Assistant

7911 Kreeger Drive, #204

Hyattsville, MD 20783

noel.warford95@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As an international student, it's very difficult to sustain given the inflationary pressure in USA and devaluation of currency in my home country.

Sincerely,

Nouman
Graduate Assistant, Smith Business School
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Collective bargaining rights are some of the most fundamental worker rights there are. It acknowledges that workers should be treated with dignity and aren't just disposable slaves.

Graduate assistants and especially research assistants are what enable our university (UMD) to be one of the best schools in the country. My department (computer science) ranks in the top 10 in the country in terms of research output. My lab (the cybersecurity lab) is arguably in the top 10 in the world! This is all possible because of the highly skilled professors and exceptional graduate students this school attracts. However, this program is unsustainable. When considering work hours (very much in excess of 50-60 hours a week for most) we're essentially paid considerably lower than minimum wage. How does the school expect us to survive on that especially with the price surges that COVID brought? We need bargaining rights to force the school for fair pay.

Our program is one of the best in the world, if it wants to remain that way, it needs to show that it values its graduate students with the most basic worker rights.

Sincerely,

Omer Akgul
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining rights because I believe it helps graduate students assure fair and safe working conditions, especially in light of how COVID-19 has impacted study, funding, and research, as well as the safety of our working conditions on campus.

Sincerely,

Phoebe Moh
Research Assistant, Computer Science
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing in strong support of collective bargaining rights for graduate employees, and urge you to pass the resolution introduced in a prior session as SB0118. This is extremely necessary for all the graduate employees who are at the forefront of novel research, teaching undergraduate and graduate students, and carrying the bulk of administrative duties and logistics ensuring the smooth functioning of their respective departments.

I am a doctoral student and a graduate research assistant. I have also been a graduate teaching assistant helping facilitate learning in both 200-level and 400-level undergraduate courses which are critical to undergraduate education in my department. Me and my fellow graduate employees make significant contributions based on a considerable amount of daily work, but our efforts are often exploited because we lack the necessary power and rights to negotiate for fair compensation and benefits. At the very least, we deserve to have our voices heard and have a functioning seat at the table when it comes to discussing and negotiating our benefits, which often determine our very livelihoods for many years. Our responsibilities also tend to increase with various roles, and unforeseen changes like the recent pandemic means adjustment and addition to our roles, efforts, and contributions. However, without collective bargaining rights, we have no say in how any shifts in responsibilities are accounted for in our pay and benefits. This can lead to devastatingly poor working conditions with no real say in how to get out of such conditions.

Collective bargaining rights will vastly help with graduate employees taking a reasonable measure of control over their working conditions instead of having to rely on the sympathy and good-will of faculty or other administrative employees. A say in the pay, benefits, and other variables that have a large impact on our lives will go a long way in helping improve working conditions and is also really the only fair option. I urge you to support me and all graduate employees by supporting and passing SB 118. To be completely honest, not passing this bill is a big stain on UMD's reputation and potential for future graduate students and employees who may want to bring their talents to our university, but may be deterred by working conditions and especially having little to no say in doing anything about it.

Sincerely,

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Pranav Goel
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The most important factor for maintaining good and fair relationship between the employees and the employer is the equilibrium between their powers, rather than something as unreliable as the benevolence of the employer. Collective bargaining, as a powerful tool for employees to protect their rights and welfare, is certainly something that should be granted to the graduate assistants and student workers to redress that delicate equilibrium.

Sincerely,

Qiuyi Chen
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GENIUSCQY@GMAIL.COM

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a 3rd year graduate student, researcher, and instructor at UMD, I know how much we as GAs, RAs, or TAs contribute to our departments and the university. We are a crucial yet often hidden and undervalued resource that forms the backbone of our community - we conduct important research and often take on the tedious grunt work, we write and contribute to cutting edge, informative publications, we submit and receive grants, we teach and mentor undergraduate students and research assistants, we help recruit more graduate students to the program, etc. that all supports the continuation and reputation of the university and its faculty. Yet, we are often treated like the bottom of the barrel, with unlivable pay, no benefits, no protections, and little guidance and support in the event of problems we encounter. Collective bargaining rights should be the bare minimum for us as graduate students, and the university should be committed to treating us fairly and well, given all we contribute during our many years at UMD. There is often and unfortunately a toxic culture in academia, and a huge power imbalance when it comes to graduate students up against those who are higher up. It is necessary and imperative that graduate students have collective bargaining so that we are all more protected, and so that the risks and work of improving graduate student life at UMD do not befall just a small group of individuals. This is also more efficient - the voice of many is more powerful than just relying on the voice of one (or some).

Sincerely,

Rachel Ghosh
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

To continue to support a fair, equitable work environment for graduate employees, faculty must do more to understand the economic precariousness of graduate students during the pandemic.

Sincerely,

Rachel Stroup
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
45 N Shafer St. Apt B5, Athens, Ohio 45701

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

We absolutely have the right to collectively bargain. We work at the university, we conduct funded research, we teach the UM system's students, and we do all this both in pursuit of a degree and (more importantly) as our job. This is our livelihood right now. We are paid so that we may eat, pay rent and utilities, help support families. But unlike many employees who work to accomplish these same needs, we are unable to improve our conditions when they are harmful. The right to collectively bargain is not exclusively a matter of higher pay; it is also a mechanism through which we can work with the university to protect ourselves against departments or advisers who mistreat us. When things are good for us, of course we don't feel that we need this. But when things get bad, we suddenly realize we have no substantial voice. We are at the mercy of the departments and advisers who have turned against us, and we have no one in our corner. Right now, we are forbidden from having such a voice within our workplace, the university. I strongly urge you to overturn this and grant us, as graduate workers, the right to collectively bargain. I appreciate your consideration and representation of us.

Sincerely,

Ramsey Karim
Graduate Assistant, Department of Astronomy
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing this testimony to support collective bargaining rights. As a graduate student working for the Department of Mathematics in the University of Maryland, College Park in the past 2.5 years, I feel that we don't have a working environment good enough and are the negligible group in the community. This should not be the case. Graduate students do the teaching, research and other critical works. We should have higher pay, better work conditions, and beyond all this, most importantly, our collective bargaining rights.

I want to address the problem of working environment with the following example. Last summer, I took a position as an instructor of a summer undergraduate course for the Department of Mathematics. The course ran 8 weeks, with a 80 minutes lecture every day, given by me alone. I also needed to assign homework, grade homework, make exams, grade exams and hold office hours. The department only offers a teaching tutor, who is shared by many different instructors. To be fair, the pay is okay, but what I felt most uncomfortable with is that the department has almost no guidelines or assistance during me teaching a whole course! The only thing they provided me is some syllabus from last year and nothing more. Unsurprisingly, they never checked on how the course was going. All these made me feel very isolated, especially since we are in a pandemic and the course I taught was offered online. I don't think this could be considered as a good working environment, and also, is not fair to the undergraduate students who paid such a lot of tuition fees to attend a course which was taught by a young man/woman with few experience and had almost no support from his/her department.

However, although I don't like the working environment and felt pitiful for my undergraduate students, I had no way to ask for more mentoring. I believe this is not a single phenomenon, but our voices could hardly be heard. Without collective bargaining rights, during the 5-6 years of our graduate study, we don't have to argue for a healthier working environment.

Sincerely,

Ran Tao
Graduate Student, Department of Mathematics
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I can confidently and unequivocally say that if I had to rely only on the salary which I receive from the University of Maryland as a Graduate Assistant, I would not be able to buy enough food, pay my rent, or pay for health insurance. The fact that I am able to do these things is in thanks ONLY to the fact that I have a savings account and my parents continue to support me. The fact that I am able to survive by overdrawing from my checking account and being forced to pull from my savings account to buy groceries is thanks to prior years of saving money before I arrived to Maryland. Simply said, I would not be able to survive off of the salary I currently receive. This is due partly to the extremely high cost of living here around the DC area, and the state taxes here in Maryland. My salary is already comically low, the high amount of taxes taken out of my salary is further insult to injury. Consequently, the extreme differences in the salaries received by students is endlessly frustrating. Why, I ask my self routinely, does someone receive \$5,000 a year more than me when we have the same job but work for different departments. My financial situation, as I watch my savings account dwindle every month as I approach complete financial disaster, has brought sleepless nights and extreme anxiety. Additionally, I am unable to move to a cheaper area or move back in with my parents due to the fact that my boss requires that I personally come into work even during the ongoing pandemic. Altogether, I beg that lawmakers work with representatives from the University to support the future educators, scientists, researchers, and leaders of America earn a living wage as we fight (quite literally) to survive.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Cawthorne
Graduate Assistant, English Department, Physics Department
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I urge you to support SB 118, and to reverse the ban on collective bargaining rights for graduate students at all schools in the University of Maryland system.

In this past year I saw the damage that COVID-19 has caused to many of my fellow graduate students, and specifically how the lack of collective bargaining rights contributed to their strife. I have always supported the efforts to grant these rights to graduate students. Last year I wrote testimony to the Assembly outlining the multiple ways in which graduate students at the University of Maryland, College Park are vulnerable to be taken advantage of in their positions and how graduate students at other Big Ten universities have protections in place that we do not.

My concerns were brought to realization when COVID-19 caused catastrophic cuts to the university system. In our offer letters from our department, graduate students are guaranteed 2 full years of a Teaching Assistantship before they are required to move to a Research Assistantship. However, over the course of last summer, the Associate Chair of Graduate Education in our department began threatening first and second year students with the possibility of cutting their Teaching Assistantships. This was an effort to force students in Research Assistantships and free up departmental funds. Graduate students in my department, including myself, had to work tirelessly to push back on our department's attempts to coerce students by threatening to take away what was promised in their offer letters.

Graduate students are professionals and are the essential workers of the higher education system and university research enterprise. We are the ones that keep undergraduate courses running, even during a pandemic. Without our work, the university system would fall apart. We deserve to have the promises made to us kept. And we deserve to have stability in our employment, especially during a pandemic. This will only be ensured through securing our rights to collectively bargain.

Sincerely,

Robert Paul Dalka

PhD, Department of Physics

Research Assistant

1531 W Falkland Ln, Apt 240,

Silver Spring MD 20910

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

rpdalka@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate workers deserve to have bargaining rights to adapt to changing needs (i.e. Covid straining worker capabilities)

Sincerely,

Rushil Dandamudi
Research Assistant
4626 Woodberry Street, Riverdale, Maryland 20737
rushilcd@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I support collective bargaining rights for all University of Maryland System graduate students because as young academics-, researchers-, and professionals-in-training, it is crucial to have the right to organize as a unified body.

Collective bargaining empowers the student body to address the financial, administrative, and workplace barriers that can interfere with pursuing the quality, innovative research that we as graduate students contribute to the university community.

Our ability to advocate for appropriate working conditions, pay, and benefits is of the utmost importance to ensure we are able to make the most of our graduate student experience, further enhance our contributions to the academic community, and set a strong foundation for every single student's career.

Sincerely,

Rya Inman
Research Assistant, Department of Geographical Sciences
University of Maryland, College Park
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

When becoming a full-time graduate assistant, it is made clear that university work is supposed to be your singular focus. Our stipends are supposed to function like a normal wage so we can focus on doing the best research and teaching we can. For many students, including myself, this is impossible. My stipend is not enough to pay my rent for a one-bedroom apartment in College Park. In order for my stipend to pay rent in the area, I would have to live in apartment buildings known for cockroaches and theft. I have to work another job to support myself, creating constant stress that interferes with my ability to do my university work. Graduate assistants do work for the university, and therefore should have access to a living wage.

A living wage cannot happen without collective bargaining. Currently, graduate assistant stipends are determined by the amount of funds available to the students' department or college. This means that students doing the same amount of work in different departments get paid differently, essentially punishing students who wish to work in a less-funded area. For example, my stipend in the Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership is \$5000 less than the stipend for a student in the Department of Computer Science. There is no logical reason that students in some fields should be paid significantly less than students in other fields. Fixing this requires change on the university level, which therefore requires collective bargaining.

Being a graduate assistant is my job. To the people I work with, I am their employee. Legally, I should be considered an employee, too.

Sincerely,

Ryen Burris
Graduate Assistant, Department of Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership
University of Maryland, College Park
9630 Milestone Way, College Park, MD 20740
burris3857@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to express my support for the passage of SB118, which would grant collective bargaining rights to graduate students at the University of Maryland. As a graduate assistant (GA) at the University of Maryland, College Park, I play an integral role in the continuous operation of university functions. For example, over this past academic year I have provided research assistance in a major project designed to improve the way that librarians help patrons protect their privacy when using public computers. This is a project that has far-reaching implications, and will be able to help many people in protecting their online privacy, a topic that is of the utmost importance right now. My fellow graduate students and I all work on projects that will have a serious and lasting impact on our society. Knowing the weight of this, we strive to put in the hours necessary to complete these projects on time, often needing to work more hours than we are compensated for. The compensation for our work is not even enough to pay our bills; I am lucky to have a spouse with a government job, but if I was not in this position I can say without a doubt I would not be able to afford to be a doctoral student. No single person can live off of \$20,000 a year; if one is lucky enough to find an apartment for \$1,200 per month, that leaves \$5,600 a year to live off of. Those of us that have tuition remission are still required to pay fees, so that's another thousand dollars gone. Who can live off \$4,600 per year? That money must cover food, a phone bill, utilities, books for school, and various other expenses. This is impossible.

The University of Maryland gets nearly \$600 million dollars in research funding in a given year. It is exploitative to pay graduate students less than a living wage. It is unjust to expect students to live off these stipends without recourse, not having the ability to advocate for higher wages. Without collective bargaining rights, it is nearly impossible for GAs to get what they need from the university in order to create a safe and healthy working environment. I vehemently believe that the right to unionize would create an avenue for GAAC to advocate for the needs of GAs much more effectively and successfully.

Sincerely,

S. Nisa Asgarali-Hoffman
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
4130 Campus Drive, 4th floor, College Park, Maryland 20742

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

snahoffman@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

It is vitally important that graduate students and other instructors and students in higher education in the state of Maryland be allowed to collectively bargain. We should not have to give up our civil rights as employees of the state. The work of higher education is more than necessary to our culture, and at this moment even more so. As our world faces now to negotiate pandemic disease as well as enduring problems such as racism and sexism, we need an informed and analytical population to not only address but cope with these challenges. Graduate students are vital to that effort on so many levels. Our world has changed significantly since many of the structures of higher education formed. It's time that work in higher education is the same as any other work in our society. Please support this effort.

Sincerely,

Sabrina Baron
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am currently a bi-national Ph.D. student in Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Maryland (USA) and at Kiel University (Germany). I am also a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow as well as a Clark Fellow. I have been an active member of the A. James Clark School of Engineering since 2013. In undergraduate, I served in many prior student leadership roles including Clark Engineering Student Ambassador, and Vice President for the undergraduate Materials Science Student Society. Since I have been in graduate school, I have directly supervised various interdisciplinary research projects for 10 undergraduate students, and five master's students.

I am writing this letter to implore you to make vital reformations to the graduate school program at the University of Maryland, College Park. I will outline the most urgent concerns of UMD graduate students, provide methods for rectifying concerns, and highlight the profound benefits the university will incur if changes are made. I thank you in advance for your serious consideration of this testimonial.

In virtually all cases, UMD graduate students receive a salary that is insufficient to satisfy their cost of living and basic necessities. This places students under undue financial strain, with no good option for remedy. If students work a second or even third job to accommodate their financial needs, it will redirect substantial amounts of time away from essential research functions they provide to the university. If students focus entirely on their academic duties, the financial strain of living paycheck to paycheck will drastically lower their ability to make productive contributions to the university. This is in addition to the myriad of devastating physical and mental health effects that chronic stress exerts on the body and mind. Simply increasing the salaries of graduate students would alleviate a major cause of stress, redoubling motivation and productivity instantly.

UMD graduate students also suffer from a lack of standardized health benefits. Each department provides disparate insurance plans, with the commonality across the board being low quality. If a student were to develop an acute problem, they cannot be assured they will receive proper care. If a student has a chronic health concern, they cannot be assured they will be able to afford their medication. Even a perfectly healthy student lives with the constant underlying concern that they are underinsured. With the massive expectations placed on graduate students, they can hardly afford to be getting sick in the first place. Providing all UMD graduate students with the same standardized options for quality health insurance would give peace of mind to these concerns.

Graduate students at Maryland are greatly overworked. I have seen regular examples of my colleagues feeling compelled to work 12+ hour days, staying in the lab until midnight and quite frequently work on weekends and holidays. Even if the students were being properly compensated for their huge amounts of overtime, which they are not, such a work schedule is completely unsustainable. Consistently working long hours drains the morale of students,

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causing sleep deprivation and mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety. It is apparent in many cases that Ph.D. advisors place heavy burdens on students so that they may achieve goals that are in their own best interest as professors competing for funding, publication, and prestige. This culture of servitude rather than mentorship and growth is an unethical philosophy. Research science is a discipline that should be focused on progress over large periods of time that contribute to society. There is no reason to exhibit a false sense of urgency that places students under a high level of duress. Students should not be made to work excessively without proper compensation. Either they should be compensated, or hours should be reduced.

Finally, UMD graduated students need the right to unionize and engage in collective bargaining. Without the ability to come together in solidarity, students have no chance to negotiate better terms of employment for themselves. Students feel a sense of learned helplessness; either they must bend to the will of their advisors and the university graduate program at large, or they face the prospect of being removed from their Ph.D. program. The underlying threat of removal from the program, in the absence of the ability to unionize, perpetuates poor conditions of employment for dedicated students. Granting graduate students the right to unionize and negotiate with their superiors is a basic liberty that would bring to light unethical practices.

I would like to conclude my letter by addressing the profound benefits the University of Maryland will enjoy, should these reforms be instituted. First, retention will improve. With students feeling happier and more secure in their livelihood, more of them will see their Ph.D. to its completion. Second, acquisition will improve. With the newly minted graduate students salaries, benefits, and rights, more prospective graduate students are likely to choose UMD for their Ph.D. programs. Third, the university's reputation will improve. UMD will gain prestige as a research institution, increasing the amount and magnitude of government funding and other grants. Last, UMD's graduate program will have a larger societal impact. UMD will gain ethos as an institution that demonstrably contributes to scientific progress, the ultimate goal.

We are aware that these are not small requests, and we greatly appreciate your consideration of the aforementioned reforms presented in this letter.

Very respectfully,

Sabrina Curtis, M.Sc.

Binational Doctoral Candidate Materials Science and Engineering:
University of Maryland, College Park, USA and Kiel University, Kiel, Germany

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow (2018 – present)

A. James Clark School of Engineering Fellow (2020 – present)

Former Treasurer of Materials Science and Engineering Graduate Student Society (2017 - 2018)

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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
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Former Vice President of the Undergraduate Materials Science Student Society (2016 – 2017)
Former A. James Clark School of Engineering Student Ambassador (2016 – 2017)

4418 Stadium Drive
College Park, MD 20742

scurtis@terpmail.umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
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SB 118
Supporting

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

Because I want to be able to have legal options in case a grad student's working conditions is not fair, although mine is.

Sincerely,

Saeed Hadadan
Graduate Assistant, CS Department
University of Maryland, College Park
4708 CHEROKEE ST, COLLEGE PARK, Prince Georges 20740-1874
2nd.silverist@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

For graduate employees, collective bargaining rights are necessary for a number of reasons. First, the problems facing graduate employees have persisted across generations of graduate students, legislators, and administrators. Over the last 20 years there have been numerous attempts to legalize collective bargaining rights for graduate employees, reversing the 2001 ban. Minimum stipends have hardly increased during that time. UMCP data shows pervasiveness of issues facing graduate employees.

Second, the current meet and confer process is not working. Despite the best efforts of graduate employee leaders, university administration has been largely unresponsive to graduate employee concerns and issues--issues like unlivable wages, unregulated hours, unclear job expectations, insufficient grievance procedures, workplace abuse, harassment, and exploitation, disproportionate rates of mental health issues, and more.

Personally as an international student from a third world country, it has been hard to balance expenditure and cost of living. For the hours of work we put in, it doesn't seem like we get fair pay and it has been hard to maintain savings account. We feel guilty spending on ourselves even if we deserve it.

I implore you to pass SB118 and legalize collective bargaining rights for Maryland's graduate employees now.

Sincerely,

Sahana Kumar
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8150 Baltimore Avenue, College Park, MD 20740
skumar97@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining

Delores G. Kelley, Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2021

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

My name is Sai Kanth, I am a Ph.D. Candidate in Physics at the University of Maryland. Nearly four and a half years ago, I graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, and I accepted an admission offer from the University of Maryland's highly reputed Department of Physics.

I came here knowing that I was far from being the first student from the best university in India to come to UMD for graduate school, and I will leave from here knowing that I am far from being the last one. At UMD, I have interacted with some of the best talent from across the globe. Although most of us are incredibly grateful for the research opportunities that UMD has provided us, we cannot help but be concerned about the lack of sufficient financial support for graduate students, and thereby a general disregard for our mental health and wellbeing.

Among all of the Big 10 schools, UMD pays its graduate assistants the least, relative to local cost of living. Given the incredibly expensive area that the DC Metro Area is, it is very difficult to manage a healthy living on our current stipend levels. Unless one lives right next to campus and doesn't need a car, has no medical expenses, has no student or other loans, spends very little on food, has plenty of family financial support, and has no other financial obligations or difficulties whatsoever, it is extremely difficult for one to not let financial distress affect one's mental health, on top of the stress that a Ph.D. already puts on one.

The lack of a sufficiently good public transportation system that works during the winter and summer, and beyond 5/6 PM each day (this is highly relevant given the long hours many of us have to spend in our labs), as well as the lack of affordable food options, puts on many of us an unhealthy amount of stress on a day-to-day basis. Unless one is willing to eat unhealthy fast food, it is essentially impossible to find a place around College Park where one can find a meal at a restaurant for under \$10. For comparison, many Big 10 schools that I've visited are located in lesser expensive areas, and food is relatively much more inexpensive. Not to mention the better pay in comparison to cost of living.

In essence, there is little to no room for error even in the best possible scenario, even with the best personal financial management skills. We are well aware of the fact that we are gaining access to education through this Ph.D., but we strongly believe that we shouldn't have to choose

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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between paying the bills and putting food on the table every single day.

Every graduate student friend that I have made here at UMD -- Americans and internationals alike -- struggle with this. Many of my American friends have student loans from their undergraduate to clear, and some even have families and kids to tend to. Among my fellow international students, many of us come from countries and families where we do not have much financial support. Doing a Ph.D. in today's fast-changing environment is incredibly difficult as it is, and the last thing that we as graduate students want to deal with is yet another source of stress and difficulty.

As many of my colleagues have said in their excellent testimonials, all that the graduate student body at UMD seeks is the right to bargain for a fair wage. It is a right that other employees of the State of Maryland deservedly possess, and it is one that we believe we deserve too, as the work that we do is incredibly important for the functioning and continuing success of the University System of Maryland.

Although we are paid for 20 hrs/wk during the semester and 40 hrs/wk during the summer, most of us work for far longer than that throughout the year. Last month, for example, my work averaged at around 55 hrs/wk. The fact of the matter is that we put in so much work not just for our own learning and success, but also so that our advisors can secure grants, and so that our department can continue to attract the best students and faculty.

It is my strong belief that a graduate student body that has its concerns truly heard and addressed can produce much better results for the University overall. It is my sincere hope that upon reading these testimonials, you will consider our reasonable request.

Sincerely,

Sai Kanth Dacha
Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Physics
#2140, Kim Engineering Building,
8228 Paint Branch Drive, University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742.
Email: saikanth.dacha@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a GA at the University of Maryland. I love my school. I love my job. I love my education. And I would not be able to do this without the support of my family, specifically, my father, a retired federal employee and union president. I am incredibly privileged to have the financial support of my father because the graduate stipend IS NOT ENOUGH to live on, let alone pursue a degree.

I have been in my position since August, 2020. In March I was evacuated from the Peace Corps because of COVID. I came back to the U.S. with no job, no health insurance, and no housing. Fortunately, I had already applied and been accepted to UMD. Over the summer I survived on unemployment, my savings, and eventually a retail position.

My first semester, with tuition remission, I used the majority of my savings and Peace Corps settlement (\$7,500) to pay my student bill. This semester, I have had to ask my father to loan me money to cover the cost of my education. I get around \$720 a month from my graduate position. I spend \$300 on rent, leaving \$420 for groceries, car insurance, and everyday necessities.

Graduate students make sacrifice after sacrifice for their education. Right now, we have no one to turn to to advocate for us. Collective bargaining would mean that we are not alone. It would allow all graduate employees the opportunity to be heard. Together, we can pool our resources and create innovative solutions that serve the entire community.

I urge you to pass SB 118 because this is a long overdue measure. We deserve a voice. We deserve recognition. We deserve collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

Samantha Anne Porzel
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
1004 Fowler Street, Falls Church, VA 22046
sporzel@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I personally feel very lucky to be part of a fantastic group in a department that pays its graduate students well, however I know this is not the case for all departments. I have many friends who are currently or were previously part of UMD's graduate school and for those who were not in STEM they were paid significantly less for their TA positions. This was an additional hardship for them and grad school. Whether this should or should not be increased is besides the point. As of now the graduate students can not even collectively bargain for higher pay if they believe they deserve it. This is not the case for other similar employees at many universities and as a state institution it seems ridiculous that they would deny their employees so fundamental in this country.

Sincerely,

Samuel August Deitemyer
Research Assistant, PHYS
University of Maryland, College Park
3711 Campus Dr. , College Park, MD 20740
sdeitemyer@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The mandatory fee each semester is a lot and I would like UMD to look into it please. The monthly stipend does not help

Sincerely,

SANCHITA CHUGH
Graduate Assistant, Division of Information technology
University of Maryland, College Park
8414 48th avenue, College park, MD 20740
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Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am an Administrative Assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park campus, and I wholeheartedly support SB0118. I am incredibly proud of my school and position in the School of Public Policy, and value the work I do in my office. Graduate assistants play critical roles in the research, academics, and administrative functioning of universities, but the University of Maryland takes advantage of graduate assistants, using them in place of hiring real staff while denying us the rights of full employees.

While I take pride in the work I do in my position, there are currently five graduate assistants (including myself) in my office, with only one staff member to provide services to thousands of students. The university uses us as a stop-gap measure to delay hiring the additional staff who's roles we fill. Meanwhile, we do not receive enough salary to even pay our rent. As a mid-career adult who left the workforce to get my higher degree, if I did not have the luxury of having a savings account (which the majority of graduate assistants do not), I would never be able to make a living. The compensation we receive could possibly suffice for an undergraduate student, but not for adults with mortgages, children, debts, and life expenses to pay.

I support SB0118 and the right for graduate assistants to collectively bargain for fair wages and equitable treatment as employees of the University of Maryland. I implore the committee members to support this bill and workers rights for graduate students in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Sarah Campbell
Graduate Assistant, School of Public Policy
University of Maryland, College Park
13011 Twinbrook Pkwy , Rockville, MD 20851
scampb93@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

It appears to be a very simple matter. Graduate Assistants (GA) perform work and are paid by the University of Maryland (UMD). This instance of a relationship between employer (e.g. UMD) and employee (e.g. GA) should not be exempt from the crucial laws put in place for every other type of occupation in the United States of America.

Sincerely,

Sean Dungan
University of Maryland, College Park
4356 Stadium Dr., College Park, Maryland 20742
seanydungan@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My name is Sergio Pinto and I am PhD candidate at the School of Public Policy. Throughout my doctoral program, I have been a Research and/or Teaching assistant with the University of Maryland.

I am privileged enough that, having worked prior to the beginning of my PhD, I had accumulated savings that meant that I was not as reliant on the graduate stipends provided by the University. However, many graduate students are, and in those cases it is a permanent source of stress that the University does not provide livable wages and that it consistently opposes our right to organize.

I study public policy and, at this point, there is a large amount of research pointing to the positive effects of collective bargaining, particularly in a country as unequal as the United States. It is also clear that those benefits flow primarily to the workers in the most vulnerable positions; given society's structural inequalities, that often means women and people of color benefit the most from being protected by collective bargaining.

It is not only about wages, either. The right to collectively organize would also afford graduate students more resources to counter retaliatory workplace practices and workplace harassment - while I was fortunate enough to never experience either personally, I know other graduate students who did and who were caught in a position where they had no power. In short, for anyone concerned with gender and racial justice, there should be no hesitation: allowing students to organize if they wish to do so would foster those goals.

Sincerely,

Sergio Tiago Barreiras Pereira Pinto
Graduate Student, School of Public Policy
University of Maryland, College Park
1403 Meridian Place NW, Washington, DC 20010
stpinto@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I need some more help as a TA at UMD and more appreciation for the work. I wish to have a raise in the pay which makes my life easier especially during summer terms.

Sincerely,

Sharmila duppala
Teaching Assistant, Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
Iribe Center, UMD, College Park, Maryland 20740

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

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Supporting

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

The lack of collective bargaining rights at UMD has left many students in untenable circumstances, including squalid living conditions and unclear or even abusive work environments. The financial and emotional strain caused by our lack of rights and protections has very real results, like poor mental and physical health, debt, and inability to finish our programs. As a developmentalist, I also know that these factors can not only negatively affect the quality of our current and future work, but can have lifelong consequences for our health and well-being. Please allow us to advocate for ourselves.

Sincerely,

Sharon Alexa McDorman
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
7915 Eastern Avenue Northwest, Silver Spring, MD 20910
s.alexamcdorman@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I believe the graduate assistants' salaries in University of Maryland system deserve a raise considering the hard work and high living expenses around DC. Also, although PhD students like me get a stipend for the tuition and living expenses, we still end up paying international student fee, mandatory fee and part of insurance every semester, which is an extra \$1000 bill.

Sincerely,

Shuke Li
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3404 Tulane Dr, Apt 13, Hyattsville, MD 20783

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

As a supervisor of graduate teaching assistants and as an advisor to graduate students, I strongly believe that graduate students should have the right to collectively bargain. They deserve the same rights as other university workers, as they are providing labor essential to the university's operations.

Sincerely,

Siv B. Lie
Faculty, School of Music
University of Maryland, College Park
3450 Toledo Terrace #301, Hyattsville, MD 20782
sivblie@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The University System of Maryland cannot function without the labor of its graduate assistants. They represent an irreplaceable component not only of USM research activities and personnel, but also of undergraduate instruction as well. With their knowledge, expertise, and labor value, graduate assistants are an irreplaceable asset for the University System of Maryland. However, denying them the right to collectively bargain not only disenfranchises them, it also dehumanises them, stripping from them their agency and their ability to fairly negotiate the terms of their employment, a right that the very foundations of labor and capital in the modern world were built on. Now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, this lack of agency is not only financially risky, but represents a real danger to graduate assistants: By denying them full employment status and their right to collective bargaining, the state of Maryland has signalled that these irreplaceable young people are not only undeserving of true employment, but are undeserving of their health and safety. The only ethical choice for the State and University System of Maryland is to allow graduate assistants the right to collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Sophia Relph
Graduate Assistant, Department of Mechanical Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
9309 Ewing Dr, Bethesda, MD 20817
sophrelph@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a PhD candidate currently in my third year. I would like to express my support for collective bargaining rights. As PhD students, we are expected to focus on our education, develop our skills as a scientists, while simultaneously delivering on our research goals. While I enjoy my work as a graduate student, I am dismayed by the fact that we are not supported enough financially. Housing and living expenses in College Park are unnaturally high. I currently pay more than half of what I earn in a month on rent alone, for a single bedroom in a shared house. I strongly feel that the income we receive as research students should be adjusted to allow us to live and work comfortably. Furthermore, as an international student, I have no safety net in terms of family or close friends that live in this country. Unlike others, international students like me who earn their stipend as a graduate assistant cannot work part-time jobs to improve their finances. Therefore, we have to manage with meager savings throughout our PhD career. I love my research field and the work I am able to do. But I am always anxious about the costs of living here, which adds to the pressure of completing our work and research goals. If the university truly believes in and appreciates the work put in by its graduate students, it should afford them the ability to bargain for their well being.

Sincerely,

Srinivasan Abhishek Kalpattu
Graduate Student, Department of Materials Science and Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
8125 48th Ave, College Park , Maryland 20740
4bhish3k17@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 118
Supporting

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

I personally experienced the benefits of graduate student collective bargaining agreements when I was at the University of Wisconsin-Madison many years ago in a situation with many similarities to the situation at the University of Maryland system. The need for a union is manyfold from job protections to benefits. Without the union, the graduate students who are degreed professionals - have undergraduate degrees and perform work which supports the teaching and research carried on at the university, would have had less pay, might not have had a tuition remission, would have had fewer health benefits, and would not have had employment protections. For example, I was bullied by a high level university official (in a university research institute, position below the level of a dean) and the university was intransigently protecting him but union involvement, and nothing short of union involvement, was able to force the university to make him retract his threat although the university still never penalized him. Graduate students at every university face unfair difficulties and can benefit from the power of collective bargaining, and most universities and university systems don't want to yield their complete control, arguing that the students who are actual performing some of the work of the university are not employees. This is an ages old problem and the legislation is needed to force the hand in order to protect vulnerable workers who face a total power imbalance against an employer who holds all the cards that affect both their working conditions and terms and their future opportunities and careers.

Sincerely,

Stephen Jascourt

3527 Toddsbury Ln, Olney, MD 20832
jascourt@umich.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am writing in support of SB 658 Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining Fairness Act. As a large part of the University's workforce, I would like to see the University grant us the same rights as other workers within the University. From my vantage point, not having the same rights as other workers within the University is a method of devaluing our work and contributions to the University. Instead of being told that we are valued in a letter, I would like these sentiments to be evidenced in the University's actions.

Sincerely,

Sydney Triola

Ph.D., Department of Information Studies, UMCP

Teaching Assistant and Research Assistant

3407 Tulane Dr.,

Apt. 23

Hyattsville, MD 20783

Sydneymtriola@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate Assistants end up working far more than 20+ hours because it takes much longer time to grade assignments and examinations. Too many students enrolled in a semester. A few GAs are hired. The semester span is the same. The deadline for completing the grading of assignments and exams is compressed / expedited. Implies, working long hours (more than 20+) to finish grading assignments and exams quickly.

Sincerely,

Syed Neyaz Ahmed

11661 Stoneview Square, Reston, Virginia 20191

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The present system does not take into account the expenses of time, money, and spirit in order to pursue a graduate degree at the University of Maryland. One the essence of time, many student have to work extremely long hours to meet the deadlines their advisors and themselves set. The main issue at hand is understanding how long certain task will take. The length of time expected by the student is largely underestimated leading to stress. The expense of time and the incurrence of stress is only troubled more so by the cost. For some, the cost of not an issue. The graduate school, for those students fortunate to have complete tuitions remission, does well to provide students with the opportunity to explore the course work they so desire.

However, there are several rules that are simply arcane and or detrimental to the student. For example, my graduate research assistance-ship allocates me i believe 12 or 10 graduate credits covered per semester. However, the ludicrous fact is that if i were to take 9 credits or more, i pay mandatory fees per semester of \$800-\$850 while if i take 8 credit or less the mandatory fees are around \$450. Why is there such a drastic uptick of cost of mandatory fees? i have read the mandatory fees and although i agree with them in the way that it is myself and other supporting the many services UMD has to offer but i feel i am not getting my fare part when i decide to take 3 three credit course and am hit with \$800+ mandatory fee where as if I just could drop 1 credit id reduce that cost by nearly half.

On the topic of expense, the collective bargaining agreement is important also for transportation and parking. Some graduate student live off campus and therefore need to commute to UMD. Im not sure what others believe but i think the cost of parking for graduate students should be 0\$. WE should be provided a parking space along with our Assistance ship. At least, this decision for a "free" parking pass while "employed" should be addressed for graduate student. This is even more imperative in the day of COVID where carpooling is a risk for any individual in the car. Also, because of this many of my lab mates were bombarded with parking tickets for parking in the wrong spot on campus, performing our necessary duties as graduate students, while the campus is seeing probably only or less than 10% of the traffic it would see during a normal semester.

Finally, id like to end on spirit. The spirit of UMD is community. We are TERPS. We want to support one another within the community and just outside of it by our research and our own extracurriculars. The spirit is damaged if graduate students are not allowed to act as a community

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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as a whole. For this reason and the others outline above, i am submitting testimony of my support for this petition.

Sincerely,

Taylor Francis Schulden
Research Assistant, Department of Plant and Landscape Science
University of Maryland, College Park
3405 Dillon St., Baltimore, MD 21224
tschulde@terpmail.umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My name is Theresa Menna. I am in the midst of my first year in a PhD program in the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences, and I am writing to implore you to support collective bargaining rights for graduate workers.

There were two things that shocked me about becoming a graduate assistant at the University of Maryland this past year. The first was my own salary. When I began to look for housing options in the College Park area, I realized very quickly that my salary of roughly \$29,500 (pre-taxes and student fees, which amount to a few thousand dollars altogether) would not be nearly enough to support single living. What it does manage to cover is the cost of surviving -- if you are willing to sacrifice some basic independence. I was a researcher at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia for three years, and a full-time teacher the year before that. I have now left the work force to pursue a PhD at 26-years-old. I believe strongly in the work I am doing at UMD, as well as the future work I will do with my education here. However, it is quite demoralizing to realize that my university does not value me the same way. Under current circumstances, I will be rationing my grocery runs and living with roommates until the age of 31.

The second thing that shocked me to my core when I learned it this year is that my salary of \$29,500 is a luxury. There are graduate assistants in other colleges at UMD that make as low as \$21,000. I have struggled to wrap my head around this number. How does it make any sense? We may be in different colleges, but we earn our salaries doing the same things -- leading classrooms, teaching, performing important research, and more. If graduate assistant salaries are meant to (at the very least) cover the cost of living in and around College Park, then how can there be such an enormous discrepancy between departments in salary? And if even the "highest" salaries barely cover the cost of living in Maryland, then what can the students on the lowest end of that spectrum be expected to do?

It is for all of these reasons and many more that I strongly, firmly support graduate students' right to collective bargaining. It will allow graduate workers to make real, tangible, positive change regarding their working conditions, and these changes could directly result in safer housing and securer access to food for thousands of workers. Regardless of student status, we are paid workers and should receive bargaining rights as such. Please do the right thing and support this bill.

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
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Sincerely,

Theresa Menna
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
6200 Westchester Park Dr. #1715, College Park, MD 20740
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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am a graduate student at UMD-College Park because i wanted to further my education in the field of education. my purpose is to dismantle systemic inequities in the education system in the U.S. I am also a graduate assistant for the university because it helps with the expensive tuition for graduate school. unfortunately, i am struggling financially—consistently—due to the low pay for graduate assistants. graduate assistants are not taken seriously, are seen as replaceable, and are severely underpaid. we are employees of the university of maryland system like other staff and faculty. we have lives, families, children, and responsibilities as well. we are people trying to live and contribute to society while we are in graduate school. we deserve the right to collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Tierra Merritt
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8715 1st Ave, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
tmerritt@uwalumni.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My name is Tifanee McCaskill. I am a second year PhD student in the Urban Education specialization for the Teaching and Learning, Policy and Leadership program at UMD. I am also a teaching assistant and research assistant working 20 hours a week who, like many others, is providing testimony to this committee.

In this current economy, graduate assistants are not being paid a living wage. In order to produce outstanding scholarship in addition to assisting the work of the excellent instructors and researchers at College Park, we must be compensated reasonably. If College Park intends on remaining an institution known for supporting equitable treatment for everyone, they must consider equitable compensation for all workers, including Graduate Assistants. As a Black woman, I will only continue to give my time and effort to a school that honors me for what I am worth. If College Park wants to remain an attractive destination for the next generation of Black scholars, then it should take a stand and support any improvement in the working conditions of graduate students. The time is always right to do what is right. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tifanee McCaskill
Teaching Assistant, School of Education
University of Maryland, College Park
220 Linden Ave, Towson, MD 21286
tifaneem@umd.edu

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Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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SB 118
Supporting

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

I have been with the University of Maryland for one semester now during which time I've worked as a teaching assistant. I spend my time grading assignments and teaching students course material. When I'm not officially working as a teaching assistant I spend my time primarily doing research with my advisor, developing algorithms to solve fundamental problems in the field of computational biology. I like my job, and the reason I support SB118 is precisely that: because it is a job.

Detractors of the right of graduate assistants to collectively bargain tend to argue that it would be bad for graduate workers and for the university system if graduate workers decided to form a collective bargaining unit. That claim may or may not be true, but it's not salient to the issue of whether graduate assistants should have the right to collectively bargain under state law should they choose to do so. Rather, the basic question is just whether graduate assistants are working for the university. The answer is obviously yes.

Prior to coming to Maryland I worked at another university as a research assistant. My day-to-day life in that job was substantially similar to that of my day-to-day life as a graduate assistant, except now I am responsible for teaching the many undergraduates who come to UMD for its nationally-renowned computer science education. It's true that I often learn things in the course of my work-day but, contrary to the university's prior testimony, this does not mean that my job is primarily a part of my education. Rather, me showing up and completing my obligations are essential to providing undergraduates at UMD an education.

Further, the work I and other GAs do in research not only helps to bring in millions of dollars in grant money to the university system every year, but also furthers one of the core missions of UMD: to do groundbreaking research. Without graduate assistants the research that UMD is known for would not be possible. Ask any faculty and they'll tell you the same.

Graduate assistants are workers, and workers deserve the right to collectively bargain. I strongly encourage the legislature to join 48 other states in recognizing this plain fact.

Sincerely,

Tobias Janssen

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Teaching Assistant, Department of Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
5303 38th ave, Hyattsville, Maryland 20781
tobiasrubel@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I believe that income of graduate assistant should rise to minimize inequality and income deficit.

Sincerely,

Uday Saha
Research Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
4303 Rowalt Dr, College Park, MD 20740
uday@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I write today urging you to support SB 118, which would provide graduate students at the University of Maryland and within the rest of the University System of Maryland the right to organize and collectively bargain. My colleagues and I have no grievance procedure, no HR channels through which to work, and no recourse to address basic inequalities. We can not take sick days or to refuse requests from supervisors and administrators that could endanger our health and safety or that of our colleagues, for fear refusal would lead to punitive measures, including the loss of our funding and an early end to our studies.

This situation has been brought into stark relief during this time of global pandemic, when many of my colleagues are being asked to continue in-person teaching, data collection, and fieldwork without clear guidance and resources from the university. Although many of us have concerns about our health and safety, we must continue to perform these duties for fear of losing our positions in our programs. Many of us have had our personal research delayed by months or years due to the pandemic and some have had their basic subsistence threatened by funding cuts, but we have no channels through which to petition the university for support as grants, fellowships, and other funding sources are paused or reduced during the pandemic. We continue working with the knowledge that, despite demanding these services from us, the university will not reimburse us for medical bills or lost wages should we become ill or need to be hospitalized.

We have all chosen to pursue our graduate studies with and contribute our talents and labors to the University System of Maryland, passing over other opportunities elsewhere, and we are proud of what we provide to the State, our Universities, and our programs. We ask in return that the General Assembly of Maryland afford us the respect it has afforded many other state employees in giving us the right to organize and collectively bargain for working conditions that protect our health and safety. Again, I urge lawmakers to support SB 118, which would allow us to present concerns to the university through formal channels, giving graduate students a voice in creating equitable and supportive living conditions for all. Thank you.

Valerie Hall

PhD Student, Anthropology

Teaching Assistant

B0104B Taliaferro Bldg

College Park, MD 20742

vhall@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Simply put, prohibiting graduate student employee's collective bargaining rights is an outdated and inequitable practice that does not reflect the values of the state of Maryland or the universities within it. Our state, and our country at large, purport to protect laborers—instituting protections for vulnerable groups (such as children), and making clear anti-discrimination practices. Furthermore, in the U.S., employees of the state must be granted certain rights, including the right to collectively bargain.

How, then, is it sensible to exclude graduate assistants from fair labor standards? My paycheck lists me as an employee. I have subsidized health insurance as an employee. I am paid as an employee. And yet, I am not protected as an employee.

This outdated practice excuses inequity by exploiting the precarious position graduate assistant employees already face: to be both student and employee of the university.

This position should not justify the prohibition of collective bargaining but should make necessary the immense need to protect an already vulnerable population. The minimum required stipend for graduate students at the University of Maryland is nearly 50% lower than the cost of living for a single adult living near College Park, Maryland. We rest at the bottom of the totem pole compared to all other Big 10 Universities.

And yet, we find ourselves at risk and unprotected by labor standards guaranteed to state employees.

The great state of Maryland values its workers, and I believe that most of our legislators want to uphold fair labor standards. If my belief is correctly placed in my representatives, the only logical next step to pass this policy guaranteeing graduate assistant employees like me collective bargaining rights.

It is high time our state policy aligns with our values of fair labor standards for graduate student employees.

Sincerely,

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Victoria Ledford

ABD Doctoral Candidate of Communication, Instructor of Record, Graduate Research &
Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication

University of Maryland, College Park

2130 Skinner Building, Department of Communication, University of Maryland, College Park,
MD 20742

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Something has to be changed. It is unfair for students who work not to have collective bargaining rights. Students are the future of the country, and they are treated poorly. Graduate students who actually need to be privileged are hiving the lowest wages in the state. Have you tried to live on 21000 per year for six years, paying different student fees out of pocket? You can't collect money for the future, you can't buy a car, you can't live alone in an apartment (it is expensive nowadays, yes). That is all you can have because you can't take a second job in grad school. Studying, doing research, and being a teacher assistant takes all your time. Isn't it depressing that you can't grow financially? And now, imagine you have to do all that during the global pandemic that goes for years.

Sincerely,

Vladimir Butyrkin
Graduate Assistant, Natural Sciences
University of Maryland, College Park
3421 Tulane Dr. Ap 11, Hyattsville, MD 20783
iec.vbut@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

My previous employment at the University of Illinois supports collective bargain.

We graduate students shall have rights to bargain with the employer to get more of our rights and preserve better living conditions especially when the inflation rate is staggeringly high.

Sincerely,

Weiye Chen
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
4600 River Road, Suite 300, Riverdale, Maryland 20737
iweiyechen@outlook.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am from the DC area, and before I enrolled I made sure that I had one of the lowest cost living situations possible so I would not be further burdened while in grad school. Despite these precautions, I have had to find supplementary income during the course of my graduate school to be able to maintain my (low) standard of living. I support collective bargaining rights, and cost of living adjustments to respect the necessary conditions for effective scholarship.

Sincerely,

Will Bien Duggan
Graduate Assistant, Department of Urban Studies and Regional Planning
University of Maryland, College Park
3033 16TH ST NW, Washington, DC 20009
willbduggan@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate students should have a chance to collectively bargain and have their voices heard by state and university officials. Too many decisions that directly affect us are made without any input from us. Graduate students deserve to be paid a living wage in the communities we live in and it is time that we get a chance to collectively bargain to ensure that this happens. We help keep universities up and running through our teaching and research and it is unacceptable that students are unable to pay their bills, while having little to no recourse to change this reality.

Sincerely,

William Bishop
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
7408 Tilden Street, Landover Hills, Maryland 20784
wbishop@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The average living cost in college park area is much higher than I expected. The rent is so high and therefore paying for my living space is burdensome considering the current stipend rate. To prevent any unwanted distracting caused by low income but high living cost, I definitely agree that the financial aid for graduate assistants should be increased.

Sincerely,

Wu-Joo Daniel Lee
University of Maryland, College Park
3209A Marie Mount Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742
wjlee1@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

From last year, I only have \$15000 after tax to spend. And more than half of it have been contributing to my rent. There is really minimum, minimum money for us to spend on our daily expense. We have been living a life as a minimum wage person in the Maryland let alone the fact that I have a house-wife that I have to feed during the pandemic. I really wish we could get more support from the government level. As a Marylander, I have been paying my tax on time, I do wish there is some help, any help from the government level to us graduate assistant. I have seen so much Ph.D. student leaving their study for work, because it is really hard to sustain their life on campus.

Sincerely,

Xiaomin Lin
Teaching Assistant, Electrical and Computer Engineering.
University of Maryland, College Park
5607 Silk Tree Dr, Riverdale, Maryland (MD) 20737
luuckiest@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

We are working and producing research. There is no reason why we should not be recognised as employers.

Sincerely,

Xiaozhen Fu
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
5015 Blackfoot Pl, College Park, Maryland 20740
xz1@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Graduate assistant's salary is too low compared with my responsibility and life expense in this area (DMV), even after the improvement at the beginning of 2022 made by UMCP.

Sincerely,

Xiyang Wy
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8223 Paint Branch Dr, College Park, Maryland 20742
wuxiyang1996@gmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I strongly support the status of graduate workers to be classified as employees and the collective bargaining rights that comes with it. The most important task of a graduate student should always be his/her coursework and thesis research. A graduate assistantship is often the only source of income supporting this crucial period of career development.

I speak as an international student at the Dept. of Mathematics at the University of Maryland. The vast majority of graduate students in our program rely solely on the income from teaching assistantship to be able to afford rent among other living costs in College Park. The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly complicated the work condition even with teaching completely online. The online environment has increased the teaching load significantly, both in adjustment to new platforms and format, and an increasing amount of assignments and greater responsibility to engage the students in the online setting. Furthermore, the graduate students are often not themselves the sole instructor, they are subject to long and frequent class meetings at the requirement of lecturers and course chairs. Without collective bargaining rights, the department will never put graduate students in any sort of priority, the graduate assistants are at the mercy of arbitrarily varying workload and unclear specification of responsibilities.

The lack of control on teaching workload have also enabled the university to hire much less GAs with lower salary compared to many other public universities. Recently the Dept. of Mathematics have implemented sudden changed the policy on support for those who have been in program for 7+ years (average length of degree is actually 6.5 years in MATH). This cruel and arbitrary decision in the middle of a global pandemic jeopardized my own assistantship position and several of my colleagues have lost their support.

Sincerely,

Xuesen Na
Graduate Assistant, Department of Mathematics
University of Maryland, College Park
3532 Powder Mill Rd, Beltsville, MD 20705
xuesen.na@hotmail.com

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

Delores G. Kelley, Chair

SB 118

Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair

Supporting

3 East Miller Senate Office Building

Annapolis, MD 21401

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

I am a graduate student and graduate research assistant at the University of Maryland. I write to you today to urge your support on SB 118.

I support this bill because collective bargaining operates as an effective means to address cost of living and employment concerns. In absence of these rights, student employees are unable to formally and bindingly negotiate with the university to address labor and employment issues.

UMD's minimum graduate assistant stipend is lower than every single flagship campus except for the University of Nebraska, when compared with estimated cost of living. My fellow students and I are struggling under severe financial stress while fulfilling our study and work tasks.

If you have any further questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact me at yhao@umd.edu.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Yeming Hao

Graduate Research Assistant & PhD Candidate

Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

3117 A.V. Williams

University of Maryland

College Park, MD 20742

yhao@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Sometimes we end up doing more work than required even if we exceed our hours. We are required to fulfill those delivery dates even during midterms and finals.

Sincerely,

Zam Mozumder
Graduate Assistant, OMSE
University of Maryland, College Park
4300 Hartwick Rd Apt 3408, College Park , MD 20740
zam@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

The wage is not livable. With limited budget, I cannot fully function in my position. We need our rights to speak up about our living conditions and by doing that we can better serve as students, assistants and researchers.

Sincerely,

Zexuan Zhao
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
9606 48th ave, College Park, MD 20740
zzhao127@umd.edu

Support for Graduate Assistant Collective Bargaining
Previous Testimony from Legislative Sessions 2020-2022

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

Employees should have rights to bargain for what they believe they deserve. Being a student or working for a state-owned institute does not make it an exception. Employers should listen to their employees' voices, not only for the well-being of employees, but also for their own sake. Because working efficiency, especially for creative types of work, comes from satisfying working conditions. I believe what the University of Maryland has done in building a healthy relationship between the school and GAs are far from satisfying. I heard complains about low salaries and high home rent in the DC area. Our mandatory fees, which a lot of schools do not have, are not included in the tuition remission. That means over \$1,600 a year if you register for over 8 credits every semester (which is a requirement in our department). I could hardly make ends meet at the beginning of every semester. Life as a PhD student is stressful, and financial burdens make the experience worse. As an International student, there are much less financial aids for us as most of them only target domestic students. Without bargaining rights, there is no way but silently suffer or just, leave. Many of the essential work in the school are done by GAs. University of Maryland has always been seeking to provide high quality teaching, part of which is provided or supported by GAs. Our research ranking achieves the highest in the history, which cannot be achieved without those hard working research assistants. If high quality education and research are still of high priority in the university, the voice of the GAs should be heard, to enlarge our community, and to make every one of us comfortably work towards a higher goal.

Sincerely,

Zipei Lu
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
3330 Van Munching Hall, College Park, MD 20742

alicia.volk.pdf

Uploaded by: Alicia Volk

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Alicia Volk, Professor

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

To Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee:

My name is Alicia Volk. I am a Professor of Art History and Archaeology at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for seventeen years. I ask this committee to issue a favorable report concerning SB 247. This right is granted by the state to nearly every other state employee, including to faculty at community colleges and to non-academic workers at four-year institutions of higher education here in Maryland. Clearly this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in our state.

I teach courses in art history, from large introductory undergraduate classes of approximately 100 students, to small capstone undergraduate courses and graduate seminars. I advise graduate students and have served as the Director of Graduate Studies or as Scheduler for my department nearly every semester of the past twelve years. I am also an active researcher, creating knowledge that I share with students in the classroom and in publications that reach specialists and general readers alike.

I believe, as our new governor Wes Moore states, that we must “Leave no one behind.” Faculty and graduate students at our institutions of higher learning deserve the right of collective bargaining, which is fundamental to our democracy. Our university system suffers from a dire lack of faculty governance to the detriment not only of faculty but of students at all levels. The right to collective bargaining will buttress faculty governance and in so doing improve the quality of education we educators offer to our students and to the state of Maryland.

Members of the committee, faculty and graduate students are dedicated workers whose voices nonetheless go unheard in university governance. We deserve better so that we may also do better. It is time to allow us the right to collective bargaining. I call for a favorable report to SB 247.

alptug.aytekin.pdf

Uploaded by: Alptug Aytekin

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Alptug Aytakin, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

The cost of living in College Park, due to its proximity to District of Columbia, is quite high; the stipend given by the school isn't enough for one to sustain their life while also living in a good neighbourhood and a not bad home. At the current stipend level, living near campus is impossible without leaving in houses where 5+ 25+ year olds are forced to live together; and moreover, the money is only enough if one is living a barely sociable life. The school is not providing enough means to alleviate the already high economic burden on a graduate student's life. They are subpar on their duties, while they are expecting so highly from us.

Sincerely,
Alptug Aytakin
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8223 Paint Branch Drive, College Park, Maryland 20742
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amir.riyahi.pdf

Uploaded by: Amir Riyahi

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Amir Riyahi, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

of the situation grad students like myself are caught in, and in many cases they are too afraid to make themselves heard (either due to the lack of representation or fear of retaliations). Many graduate students would have to endure large lump sums of money when they travel on behalf of the university (on projects budgets which have already been approved and paid to the university) but yet have to incur large sums of debt on their credit cards and apply for a reimbursement, which in many cases could take up to a few months. This in turn worsens a vicious cycle of debt and low and lower credit score, which puts them in even greater financial disadvantage.

I have been awarded a fellowship which does benefit our department, but at the same time the and due to a series of administrative mistakes, have not received any paychecks for an entire month. You can imagine the extend of financial distress that young grad students with very small/non-existent financial buffer could go through if they do not receive the small compensation they are supposed to on a regular basis. Luckily, I have had a supportive advisor who has chosen to lend me some money until the administrative issue is resolved, but I can not simply put this behind me and ignore all the other students who might fall into the same situation and do not receive any support, or in worse scenarios, receive some ill intended monetary support from their advisor, which could put them at extreme exploitation risks.

And this is only the visible side of the story, while ignoring all the individuals who might be too afraid of simply talking about the injustice they may be going through.

Sincerely,
Amir Riyahi
Graduate Assistant
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
3802 Upshur St, Brentwood, MD 20722
ariyahi@umd.edu

amy.wickner.pdf

Uploaded by: Amy Wickner

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Amy Wickner, Electronic Records Archivist / PhD Candidate
SB 247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

collective bargaining offers a powerful means for higher education workers to determine our own working and living conditions. This testimony will focus on the experiences of graduate assistants and library faculty. As a librarian, student, and former graduate assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park, I can attest that graduate assistants and librarians perform work that is necessary for a functioning university, and that enjoining us to perform this work without the right to collectively bargain is exploitation.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS: University administrators like to say that graduate assistants are "students first." The "students first" approach has not protected grad assistants' welfare or ability to balance earning wages with completing degree requirements, as administrators claim, nor is it intended to. Instead, it effectively denies an entire class of workers, who are also students, the rights they should be accorded as workers.

Many graduate assistants teach multiple sections or entire courses, including large general education, core curriculum, and introductory courses. Often the first instructors new students encounter at the College Park campus are graduate student workers. Graduate assistants conduct the research on which faculty members depend for their own advancement, taking responsibility for hands-on and/or repetitive tasks that faculty members and staff will not do. Graduate student workers keep labs and studies running while faculty pursue grants and other external funding on which the university bases its research enterprise. At the University Libraries, where I work, core library functions depend on the labor of graduate assistants: teaching, managing metadata, improving usability, processing archival collections, and maintaining digital systems. Graduate assistants fill crucial administrative and mentoring roles as academic advisors to large numbers of fellow students, or developing programs at the many centers on campus — such as the LGBT Equity Center and Multicultural Student Involvement and Community Advocacy (MICA) at the Stamp Student Union.

With collective bargaining rights, graduate assistants could negotiate for livable pay, safe and equitable working conditions, protections for international student workers, and access to housing — all deeply felt needs that UMD Fearless Student Employees has identified among our graduate peers. For example, among Big 10 universities, UMD has the largest gap between minimum graduate assistant stipends and local cost of living.

LIBRARY FACULTY: A financial analysis commissioned by UMD-AAUP shows that University of Maryland, College Park librarian positions on the permanent-status track (our equivalent of tenure track) fell to an 8-year low in 2022. This represents a 22% loss since 2015 with an especially dramatic loss of more than a tenth of positions relative to 2020. The loss of

positions has resulted in chronic overwork. Librarians are underpaid as well as overworked: Our average salary in 2021 was just 58% of the average salary for all full-time faculty.

Library administrators have tried filling the gaps with every possible category of short-term worker with even worse pay and protections: professional-track/adjunct faculty, contract staff, graduate assistants (as described above), hourly student workers, and volunteers. Exploiting these workers has not helped faculty librarians with our workloads or compensation, however. A more robust response is needed. With collective bargaining rights, faculty could negotiate for the funding, staffing, equitable working conditions, and job security needed to sustain the Libraries, a vital research and educational resource for the UMD community and beyond.

The university would collapse were graduate assistants and faculty to withhold our labor. University administrators across Maryland have long resisted collective bargaining rights for these workers out of fear, using duplicitous and divisive means. It's time for the General Assembly to hold these state institutions to account.

Sincerely,
Amy Wickner
Electronic Records Archivist / PhD Candidate
University Libraries / College of Information Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
2216 Hornbake Library, College Park, MD 20740
amy.wickner@gmail.com

andrew.goffin.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Andrew Goffin, Research Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

affording basic necessities as a graduate assistant is a constant struggle. As a student in the Electrical & Computer Engineering department, I have a much higher stipend than others at the university, and my advisor allows me to have a good work-life balance. However, even with my current stipend it is difficult to afford living in the DC area. Those with average or below average stipends can find it nearly impossible. The massive spikes in inflation and housing costs have made recent stipend increases unable to reduce the financial burden grad assistants face. Regardless, stipend and work-life balance are highly dependent on my department, advisor, and campus of study. On an individual level, no graduate student can petition for improvements in their working conditions, especially when such issues vary wildly between departments and campuses. Such improvements can only be attained through collective bargaining.

Of course, even if graduate students decide not to unionize, we should have the ability to decide that for ourselves. We are workers and keep the wheel of academia turning through our research and teaching, and as such should have the freedom to bargain for our rights if we so choose. This bill is a necessary step to having that freedom, and I sincerely hope that the bill is passed.

Sincerely,
Andrew Goffin
Research Assistant
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
6200 Westchester Park Dr, Apt 1216, College Park, Maryland 20740
atgoffin95@gmail.com

andy.hines.pdf

Uploaded by: Andy Hines

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Andy Hines

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Andy Hines and I am a Maryland resident who has worked in higher education for over a decade. My spouse is a faculty member in the University System of Maryland, and I work at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, though I testify today as a private citizen. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I wish to testify generally about the value of collective bargaining in higher education as it extends to full- and part-time faculty, as well as graduate workers. Faculty and graduate students in higher education have long had a complex relationship to collective bargaining. Leaders of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which grew out of debates about the professional status of faculty at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore in the early twentieth century, saw value in a selective defense of academic freedom and shared governance within higher education. At the time, AAUP viewed faculty unionizing efforts as creating a potential conflict of interest between the protected space of the classroom and the sphere of public debate and opinion. **Faculty who sought to unionize at the turn of the twentieth century, however, argued that unions provided a more direct connection to public concerns and thus provided a claim on higher education's public importance.** Conditions have changed dramatically from this century-old debate that had roots in Maryland, though it is perhaps more the case than ever that the right of collective bargaining for faculty and graduate students will ensure that the state's higher education institutions best serve the public.

Today, faculty—especially those not protected by tenure—find themselves with less control over their working conditions amidst growth in the upper administration of higher education institutions. These conditions jeopardize the ability of part-time faculty and graduate students to convey scholarly ideas freely in the classroom and to request better conditions for their work. This national context holds true in Maryland. **USM administration has grown by nearly 50% since 2015, while faculty wages have stagnated and the increase in part-time faculty has well outstripped the growth of full-time faculty. Existing governance structures diminish rather than amplify the voices of part-time faculty and graduate students and collective**

bargaining can help ensure that the expertise of these groups shape our state's higher education institutions.

I view collective bargaining for faculty as an issue of equitable, multiracial democracy; providing collective bargaining rights is a crucial step towards—to echo Governor Moore's motto—leaving no one behind. Those most marginalized within the faculty hierarchy are most likely to be people of color and women, according to a study from the TIAA institute. Collective bargaining also encourages equity in existing salaries and wages; it can significantly redress the significant gender disparity in salaries at many USM institutions, some of which are near the lowest among their peers. **Improving the economic conditions of USM's instructional staff therefore means improving the economic conditions of a diverse group of Marylanders.**

Furthermore, as organizers have been arguing for a century, collective bargaining units, or unions, *connect* employees to an institution and the wider public, rather than alienate them from them. Collective bargaining activities frequently foreground that teacher working conditions are student learning conditions. Unions also connect part-time faculty, who may be working at multiple postsecondary institutions to make ends meet, more directly to the activities of a particular institution via their local. **In nearly every respect, collective bargaining will solidify connections between workers within the University System of Maryland and the wider state public.** This bill provides an opportunity to strengthen the connection of higher education to the public by investing in and supporting the expertise of academic workers during an urgent moment when public higher education faces existential threats in other states.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

anny.gaul.pdf

Uploaded by: Anny Gaul

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Anny Gaul, Assistant Professor of Arabic, University of Maryland, College Park
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Anny Gaul and I am an Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked since 2020. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach classes in advanced Arabic language as well as in the history, politics, and culture of the Arab world. On top of this I regularly publish new research on the Arab world in scholarly journals and engage in public outreach activities; and as a tenure-track faculty member each year I spend in the job, I take on a greater share of responsibility for running the academic programs that I am a part of and serve on faculty committees responsible for the day-to-day running of those programs as a part of my job responsibilities.

In my nearly three years at the university it has become increasingly clear to me that faculty have little to no power when it comes to making financial and budgetary decisions about the programs we are tasked with running, even as our administrative burdens increase. This connects to a number of challenges that could be addressed through a collective bargaining process, including:

- Pay equity: UMD's gender pay gap is the second worst among its peer institutions. As it stands faculty have little to no power to enact policies that address pay equity issues, whether at the department level or at higher levels of the administration. I saw this first hand when I served on the Salary & Merit Committee in my department last year: although the faculty had democratically created and voted to approve a policy addressing pay equity regarding the money we were supposed to allocate at the department level, our ability to actually implement it according to that policy was subject to the permission of administrators who had specific alternative parameters for its allocation.
- Administrative burdens that detract from teaching & research: The number of full-time faculty at UMD has not increased in accordance with increased enrollment since 2016. This means that faculty like myself are increasingly burdened with administrative tasks that take time away from our teaching and research. Meanwhile the number of UMD administrators at the management level has increased significantly -- up 42.4% from

2015 to 2019 and an additional 8.4% from 2020 to 2022, even as office and administrative support staff numbers have declined in the same period. In effect this means that less and less money from the state budget is actually making it to classrooms and to new research. Collective bargaining would empower us with mechanisms to counter this trend.

Bargaining rights would not only improve my working conditions but strengthen my program as a whole, which relies on the labor of a team of absolutely outstanding language instructors working under precarious conditions with no mechanism for safely speaking out, let alone improving those conditions. Improving their job security and working conditions translates into a better education for Maryland students.

Finally, as a graduate student whose colleagues unionized while I was completing my PhD at Georgetown, I saw first hand what a difference the right to collective bargaining made in the lives of graduate student workers and the competitiveness of their programs. Graduate student workers are full-time professionals who teach classes, fulfill key administrative roles, and represent the university and the state when presenting their research. Graduate students who have collective bargaining rights tend to earn better compensation packages with better working conditions than those who do not have those rights, meaning that the work that they do is more likely to be compensated in line with a living wage: the current Georgetown academic year stipend is \$33,814 (attained through a bargained contract) while even with recent COLA increases the equivalent UMD stipend begins at \$24,728. Granting our graduate student workers the right to collective bargaining would ensure we can recruit and retain the best researchers and teachers, and it also makes graduate education more equitable. As it stands currently, these programs are most accessible to those with a family safety net or personal wealth or those who are willing to go into debt to complete their graduate programs. Collective bargaining would make these programs accessible to anyone who is qualified and interested, as a public education ought to be.

Members of the committee: this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right that benefits everyone by extending equity and democratic practices, which should be the priority of any system of public education. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. Universities where faculty have collective bargaining rights, including many of the country's prestigious public research universities, are places where professors are empowered to bargain a contract that reflects the issues that matter most to them—which should be a given at a public institution in a democratic society. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this fundamental right no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

AS_Collective bargaining testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Ashesh Sharma

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Ashesh Sharma, Graduate Student, UMBC**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Ashesh Sharma and I am a graduate student at UMBC, where I have worked for 3 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I wanted to start by introducing the type of work I do. I am a graduate research assistant in a research laboratory in the chemistry and biochemistry department however, I have spent half of my time here at UMBC as a teaching assistant in various laboratory courses in the Biological Sciences department as well as Chemistry and Biochemistry department. The courses that I helped teach are quite popular among students and in total, we have at least 90-100 students each taking the laboratory courses. My responsibilities as a research assistant currently include not only conducting my own research project for my graduate degree but also mentoring up-and-coming undergraduate and high school researchers in STEM in my own laboratory setting. I am currently mentoring five undergraduates, one high school student, and one post-bachelor student. As our lab focuses on developing independent research skills in our researchers, mentoring the researchers in a way that helps them develop independent research/work skills forms one of the core parts of my work here at UMBC. In short, the time I spend off my own bench is not only dedicated to traditional supervision and mentoring, but a large chunk of time is also dedicated to helping my mentees navigate their classes/own research projects through discussions, meetings, and assisted readings. If I may be permitted to write for my fellow research assistants as well, almost all my fellow graduate research assistants are also working beyond their own research projects in different capacities to contribute to the educational environment here at UMBC.

A lot of my individual difficulties associated with my work are the difficulties arising from the lack of proper channels that regulate the communications between the administration and the graduate student. A lot of challenges I encountered in trying my best to go above and beyond my work requirements are not only the lack of a support system that allows and encourages me to do so but also the lack of legal protection that would protect me to argue for the creation of the said support system. The lack of proper attention in even the basic support system such as mental health care, educational, and training support that allows for the improvement of quality of life and quality of service provided by the graduate students are in themselves challenges

that I need to navigate by myself taking time off my own personal life. I think that the enactment of this bill into law not only would provide the basic protection to work towards changes that are conducive to the health and overall, well-being of myself and other graduate students but would also provide a stepping stone for greater involvement and greater commitments from the graduate student community.

As an institution providing education as a service to the people, the quality of education provided through a university is not only contingent upon the framework of that university, but the majority of it is solely dependent upon the individuals that are directly involved in educating the students. It is only through the individual faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students going above and beyond the requirements of their work that a student in a university can feel the quality of education they receive. However, the legal framework that encourages and protects the faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students in going above and beyond their work requirements and bargaining in the service of not only their own quality of life but also in service of their students and mentees has been missing in UMBC and surely in other state campuses in Maryland as well. Without the legal umbrella that shields the employees that are primary to the service that a university provides, a lot of voices go unheard, a lot of suggestions go unanswered, and more importantly, a lot of voices go unspoken. This not only undermines the freedom of speech and expression that the constitution grants but also the freedom afforded to a human being in a community, which is a natural freedom. Hence, the right to collective bargaining is such a legal framework, a legal umbrella that protects and encourages the faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students in going above and beyond their work requirements ensuring that the quality of education that they provide is as high as possible. Hence the exemption of public institution faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students from this right no longer holds any meaning. I again, therefore, call for a favorable report to SB 247.

bayley.lopez.pdf

Uploaded by: Bayley Lopez

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Bayley J. Marquez, Assistant Professor, Department of American Studies,
University of Maryland, College Park**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Bayley J. Marquez and I am an assistant professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 3 and a half years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a tenure track professor my job entails research, teaching, supervising graduate and undergraduate student research, and service to the university. I teach two classes per semester in the areas of Native American studies and Ethnic studies which are areas that students have a great interest in and which we are in great need of more faculty to teach across the university. This particularly concerns me in relation to the fact that the overall number of full-time faculty rose 3.1% from 2014 to 2022; while undergraduate enrollment rose 16% and the number of tenure track faculty in particular fell 6.9% during that time. In our department we are often struggling to have enough full-time tenure track faculty to cover the many courses our students wish to take. This means that a great deal of the teaching load is supplemented by graduate student instructors and professional track faculty. The number of non-tenure track faculty has risen 19.3% across the university in the same timeframe. These faculty are often subject to working conditions that are far more precarious than tenure track faculty. They are also often overworked and have fewer avenues for redress of issues they face in the workplace because they may fear losing their job is less secure than a tenured position. Graduate student instructors are also overworked with as many as 36% working over the 20 hours per week that their contracts stipulate. The implementation of both rules and policies around graduate student work hours and protections from harassment and discrimination are not consistent for graduate students placing them in a precarious position. Thus, the instructors that are filling in the gaps to the universities lack of tenure track hiring are facing precarious work conditions which they have very little redress for. Graduate student and faculty unionization would provide an avenue to address these issues. As a tenure track faculty I feel it is necessary to support the rights of workers across all levels of the university or else the primary mission of our institution, teaching, will be greatly impacted by the disparities that different types of instructors face in the workplace.

I also support SB 247 because collective bargaining is a basic democratic right. Three states (New York, Missouri, and Hawaii) have written the right to collective bargaining into their constitution and Illinois voters passed a referendum for a constitutional amendment supporting the right to collective bargaining with 58% approval. Maryland is not a conservative right to work state and should be a leader in protecting the democratic right to collective bargaining. Additionally, research suggests that collective bargaining can strengthen relations between administrators and graduate students and faculty at academic institutions because it provides

clearer lines of communication and more effective monitoring and implementation of workplace policies. Many public universities across the U.S. have collective bargaining for both faculty and graduate students and are doing well financially and continue to be premier academic institutions. One local example is Montgomery College which ranks number 7 in the nation and has long had collective bargaining rights for faculty workers.

Members of the committee, Governor Wes Moore's motto for the state of Maryland is "Leave no one behind," yet we are excluding faculty and graduate students from the rights to collective bargaining. This is a fundamental failing in terms of promoting equity and justice in our state. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher education institutions in the country, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense and leaves too many Maryland workers behind. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

sb247Bradley.pdf

Uploaded by: Benjamin Bradley

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Benjamin Bradley, Discovery Strategies and Systems Librarian
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Hello, my name is Ben Bradley, and I first want to thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony. I started at UMD about 7 years ago, as a graduate student at the College of Information Studies. During that time I held a position as a GA and a second position as a student worker. I started at the University of Maryland Libraries, as a librarian, just about six years ago.

Like other faculty, librarians have expectations of scholarship and service which are in addition to, what we would call, our “day jobs” as librarians. Librarians across the state system teach information literacy, helping students understand fact from fake news. We support, preserve, and make accessible faculty research. We create programs to make education more affordable such as textbook lending programs and open educational resources. We manage large physical and electronic collections, managing and developing systems and websites to provide access to our resources to a wide range of users in our communities.

I support this bill because, as a faculty librarian, I have seen how declines in support of the UMD Libraries affect my colleagues in the Libraries, faculty across the university, and students. Collective bargaining is a right we need in order to advocate for better conditions.

You might expect that during the Information Age, there would be greater investment in managing all this information that libraries provide, which we have seen in the past few years can have serious real-world implications. However, if you look at the data provided by UMD’s Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment (IRPA),¹ you will find that this is not the case. Today College Park has about 5,000 more undergraduate students and 1,000 more graduate students on campus than it did in 2001. There are about 900 more staff, 800 more faculty, and 500 more GAs. The number of courses has grown by about 30%, so that there were 1318 more courses in the Fall of 2022 than in the Fall of 2001, yet over that period of time the Libraries lost over 1/3 of its total personnel: staff, faculty, and GAs.² The number of faculty librarians at UMD in 2001 was 107 and in 2022 that number was 62, a 42% drop. That is up from an all time low of 57 total librarians the previous year.³ The staffing situation at the UMD Libraries is more dire today than it was in the fallout of the Great Recession. Less personnel means there are fewer people to manage the increasingly complex resources the system invests in. There are more

¹ https://public.tableau.com/shared/ZWKZMQTQ8?:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link&:embed=y&:device=desktop

² https://public.tableau.com/shared/CJBER82KM?:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link

³ https://public.tableau.com/shared/5PPKK7B9G?:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link&:embed=y&:device=desktop

students to help, more courses to instruct, and more faculty to support, yet less people to do it all. It means that librarians, not just at College Park but across the system, are asked to do more and more with less and less: services are cut; subscriptions canceled; librarians burnt out. This demonstrates divestment by the university in providing access to information and the resources to interpret that information. It also demonstrates retention issues as librarians struggle with their workloads and leave.

I urge this committee to provide a favorable report on SB 247, so we can have the tools to make concrete changes to improve the conditions at our universities. Collective bargaining rights are extended to a variety of classes of workers throughout the state, yet for some reason state law explicitly states, if you teach at a university, are a librarian, or happen to be a student, you do not have access to these rights. I ask you to provide a favorable report

UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES



SELECT ORGANIZATION:

Employee Headcount - Total

College
Libraries

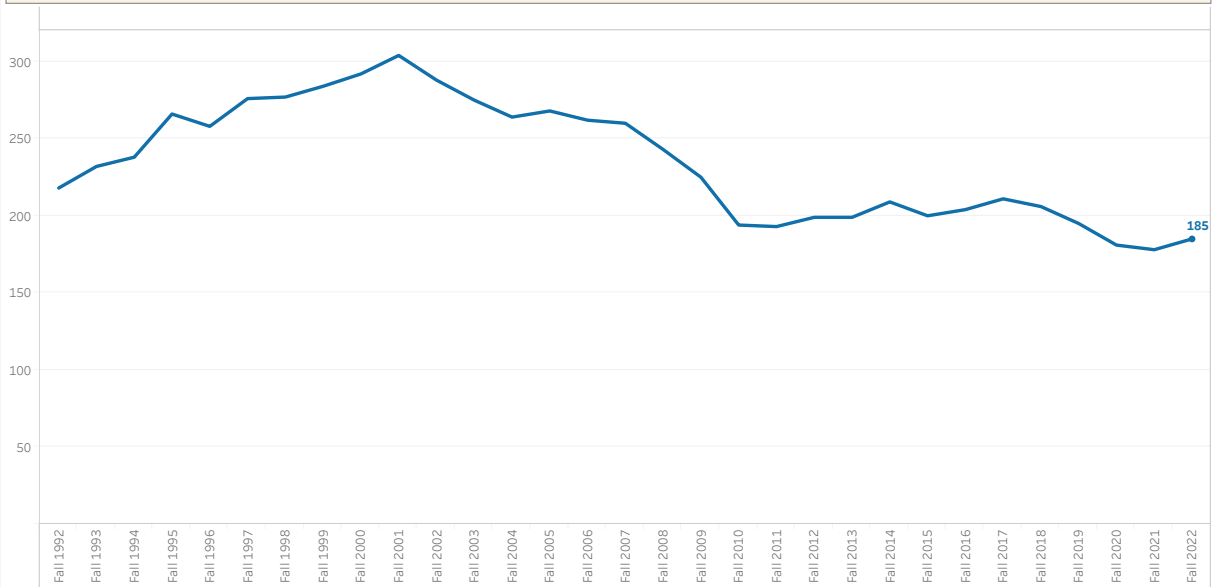
College: Libraries
Department(s): All
Employee Group: All

Department
All

SELECT DATA VIEW:

Total

Total



UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES



SELECT ORGANIZATION:

College
Libraries

Department
All

SELECT FALL TERMS:

2006 to 2013

SELECT EMPLOYEE GROUP:

All

COLUMN 1:

Employee Group

COLUMN 2:

Employee Category

Use the column parameters above to create a custom table.

Employee Headcount - EEO Reporting

College: Libraries

Department(s): All

Employee Group: All

Column 1	Column 2	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
Faculty	Other Faculty	94	97	81	81	72	66	75	71
Grad Assist	Research Assistants					1			
	Teaching Assistants	34	36	35	22	7	15	16	15
Staff	Exec, Adm, Mgr	1	2	2	2	2	4	4	4
	Tch/Par Prof	12	9	9	8	9	6	4	6
	Professional	41	40	44	41	36	37	40	48
	Clerical	80	76	72	71	67	65	60	55
Grand Total		262	260	243	225	194	193	199	199

UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES



SELECT ORGANIZATION:		Employee Headcount - IPEDS/SOC Reporting								
College Libraries		College: Libraries								
Department All		Department(s): All								
		Employee Group: All								
Column 1	Column 2	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017	Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	
Grad Assist	Graduate Research Assistan..	18	20	22	19	20	15	16	18	
Staff	Archivists, Curators and Mu..	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	
	Business and Financial Oper..	35	35	35	35	38	38	38	41	
	Community Service, Legal, A..	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	
	Computer, Engineering and ..	17	18	21	19	18	17	17	15	
	Librarians	66	68	70	68	66	61	57	63	
	Library Technicians	46	46	47	49	43	40	39	39	
	Management Occupations	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	
	Non-postsecondary Teachers	5	5	5	5					
Office and Administrative S..	6	4	4	4	6	6	6	4		
Service Occupations	1	1	1	1						
Grand Total		200	204	211	206	195	181	178	185	

SELECT FALL TERMS:

2015 to 2022

SELECT EMPLOYEE GROUP:

All

COLUMN 1:

Employee Group

COLUMN 2:

Employee Category

Use the column parameters above to create a custom table.

Guay_Testimony_Senate.pdf

Uploaded by: Beth Guay

Position: FAV

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

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance 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 SB 247. 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.

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 SB 247 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.

From my perspective, shared governance has not helped faculty at UMD. For example, as reported in the 2016 UMD University Senate Document # 12-13-50 prepared by the Senate Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC), salary compression, gender bias, and the process in which administrators offer retention raises to faculty with outside offers contribute to salary inequities.

The President stated: "I am ... resolved to eliminate salary compression, the result of hiring new employees at market rates but not providing for salary increases to current employees. Competitive counter-offers to retain our best people also amplify salary inequities. Thus, a high priority in the Flagship 2020 plan is to reduce salary compression in the coming years by creating a salary equity fund when state funding for salary increases is available."

No salary equity fund has materialized.

For all of the above reasons, I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Thank you.

brett.a.setera.pdf

Uploaded by: Brett A Setera

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Brett Setera, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Brett Setera and I am a Graduate Research Assistant at the University of Maryland College Park, where I have worked for 3 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a graduate research assistant, I have had the responsibility of being a teaching assistant for an undergraduate course consisting of roughly 50 juniors and seniors on solid state physics for one semester. In my department, every graduate student must perform one semester as a teaching assistant and can be called upon to do it again if needed in addition to devoting time to developing their scientific thesis. Luckily for me, my teaching assistant appointment was for a course that relates to my thesis work and my other work as a research assistant has also helped me move toward achieving a PhD.

While I currently have no complaints about my personal situation as a graduate research assistant within the university system, I cannot idly watch as other graduate students deal with issues that they feel they have no recourse for. There doesn't need to be anything wrong with the system for us to want the right to collectively bargain, as is already granted to many public and private universities across the nation already. It is simply a tool that we can use to improve our working conditions, if need be, by relying on each other instead of relying on our employer/administration. Therefore, I call for a favorable report to SB 247 to help our University of Maryland system be the best that it can be.

SB247CarolineThorneSGA_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Caroline Thorne

Position: FAV

Committee: Finance

Testimony on: SB247, State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Position: Favorable

14 February 2023

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and the members of the Finance Committee,

The University of Maryland, Student Government Association supports SB247 in granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and certain graduate students at the following institutions: the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and the St. Mary's College of Maryland. This bill is significant because it protects collective bargaining procedures, and allows these groups to unionize if they so choose.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for this important bill. My name is Caroline Thorne and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the University of Maryland's Student Government Association (SGA). On behalf of our SGA, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB247 to ensure that faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students' right to unionize is protected.

Investing in graduate education, and the well-being of graduate students is of the utmost importance to the functioning and operations of our institutions. Undergraduates interact with graduate students serving as teaching assistants, research mentors and assistants, as advisors, and in many other capacities. Currently, some graduate assistants are living and working in poverty, which aside from having detrimental impacts on their own work and lives, negatively affects the undergraduates they are teaching. The protection of the ability to unionize would allow graduate students to form a union if they desire, which could improve their own standard of living as well as the operations of education at the universities.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB247.

Thank you,



Caroline Thorne
Student Government Association, Director of Government Affairs
University of Maryland — College Park
cthorne@terpmail.umd.edu

SB0247 Collective Bargaining FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY FOR SB0247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and
Graduate Assistants

Bill Sponsor: Senator Kramer

Committee: Finance

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0247 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of individuals and grassroots groups with members in every district in the state. We have over 30,000 members across the state.

The rights of workers to organize and to bargain collectively with employers ensures that both workers and management come to the table as equals. Workers have organized in many different industries and have been able to ensure that they have good working conditions, health care, and reasonable wages.

It does cost employers more. There is absolutely no argument about that. Employers will always say that they can't afford to have workers organize because it eats into their profits, and often they prevail. Our members would respectfully ask you to look at this from the side of the workers. Is it right for an employer to pay sub-standard wages, or provide poor working conditions so that THEY can make more profit, at the expense of their workers? Any business that cannot pay a decent wage and provide decent working conditions does not deserve to be in business.

Colleges, like any other business should not be operating by taking advantage of workers. They should be enthusiastic in their support for good working conditions and good wages, and should welcome organizing and collective bargaining. They should be showing by example how a good business relationship works. After all, isn't this what they want their students to learn in the first place?

This bill will allow for collective bargaining for Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants at state universities and colleges. The Maryland Legislative Coalition supports this bill and we recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.

SB247_MSEA_Gobel_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Christian Gobel

Position: FAV

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and
Graduate Assistants**

**Finance Committee
February 16, 2023**

**Christian Gobel
Government Relations**

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 247. Senate Bill 247 would grant collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland. We strongly support the expansion of collective bargaining rights to these workers, and this legislation is long overdue.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

For far too long, many workers in Maryland's public sector have been unable to enjoy the freedom to collectively bargain through their unions. Maryland's development of public sector collective bargaining for workers has been piecemeal, incremental, and insufficient to meet the needs of working families, especially when compared to other states public sector collective bargaining systems.¹ Senate Bill 247 makes meaningful

¹ Maryland State Labor Boards, *Public Schools, Higher Education, State Employees*, slides 7-8 (2014) (noting the development of public sector collective bargaining for certain state employees and higher education employees developed from 1996 – 2012), retrieved from: <https://laborboards.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2014/05/Powerpoint-for-Shanghai-Delegation-Feb-2013.pdf>; See also, Jimmy Tarlau, *Many Workers in Md. Don't Have the Right to Form a Union. That Needs to Change*, Maryland Matters (May 20, 2021), <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2021/05/20/jimmy-tarlau-many-workers-in-md-dont-have-the-right-to-form-a-union-that-needs-to-change/>.

progress to correct this historical error, by extending collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants.

Collective bargaining for public sector faculty and graduate assistants is neither unique, nor is it novel. Rather, there is a long practice of collective bargaining in institutions of higher education across the country that demonstrates the success and flexibility of collective bargaining.² Pennsylvania and New Jersey are two neighboring states that have long granted collective bargaining rights to higher education workers. Collective bargaining agreements between higher education workers and university systems in these states demonstrates the sophistication and flexibility of the parties' ability to address a myriad of issues in the higher education setting.³

Numerous states across the country grant higher education workers the right to collectively bargain, regardless of the partisan lean of the state. For example, the state of Nebraska enacted a broad public sector collective bargaining legal system approximately fifty years ago, which included faculty in higher education.⁴ Collective bargaining relationships persist to this day between Nebraska institutions of higher education and labor unions representing faculty and other higher education workers.⁵ Similarly, Florida enacted a broad public sector collective bargaining regime decades ago that encompasses both faculty and graduate assistants in public sector

² See generally, The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education, *Directory of Bargaining Agents and Contracts in Higher Education* (Apr. 1, 1977) (compiling collective bargaining agreements across the United States between institutions of higher education and faculty dating back to the 1960s and 1970s.), <https://www.hunter.cuny.edu/ncscbhep/assets/files/directory-april-1977.pdf>.

³ See, Agreement Between Association of Pennsylvania State College and University Faculties and The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2023), https://www.passhe.edu/inside/HR/LR/Documents/APSCUF_July2019-June2023.pdf; Draft Agreement Between State of New Jersey and Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFT, AFL-CIO, State Colleges/Universities Unit (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2023), <http://www.cnjscl.org/AFT%20FT%202019-2023%20FT-PT%20-%20Pending%20Reindexing%20-%20Not%20for%20Final%20Publication.pdf>.

⁴ See, *American Association of University Professors, University of Nebraska Chapter, University of Nebraska v. Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, et al.*, 198 Neb. 243 (1977) (defining bargaining units of faculty across the Nebraska higher education system).

⁵ See, Collective Bargaining Agreement between The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska at Omaha Chapter American Association of University Professors (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023), https://www.unomaha.edu/academic-affairs/_files/documents/compliance/collective-bargaining-agreement.pdf.



universities and colleges.⁶ Again, these collective bargaining relationships have persisted for decades and continue to the present.⁷ Ample evidence exists across the country dating back decades that collective bargaining is a successful practice and procedure between faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants and institutions of higher education.

Every worker, whether they are in the private sector or the public sector, deserves a seat at the table with their employer to discuss their working conditions. The dignity of labor requires that all workers be able to enjoy the fundamental right to collectively bargain with their fellow workers. There is no rational basis to continue to deny or delay collective bargaining rights for workers, including faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants.

MSEA whole-heartedly endorses this legislation and applauds the sponsors for bringing forth this critical piece of legislation. We continue to urge lawmakers to enact policies that lift up the voices of workers and recognize the dignity of labor.

We urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on Senate Bill 247.

⁶ See *United Faculty of Florida, Local 1847 v. Board of Regents, State University System*, 417 So. 2d 1055 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1982) (holding graduate assistants are public employees with the right to collectively bargain under Florida's public employee relations act and state constitution).

⁷ See Collective Bargaining Agreement between the University of Florida Board of Trustees and the United Faculty of Florida (2021 – 2024), <https://uff-uf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021-2024-UFF-UF-Collective-Bargaining-Agreement.pdf>.

SEIU Local 500 Testimony SB 0247 in Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Christopher Cano

Position: FAV



SEIU Local 500

901 Russell Avenue, Suite 300, Gaithersburg, MD 20879

February 16th, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 0247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Support

Chairwoman Griffith and Senate Finance Committee Members,

Good afternoon. My name is Christopher Cano, coordinator for member political engagement at SEIU Local 500. I wish to thank Senator Kramer for his leadership on this issue before us today. Throughout our great state, tens of thousands of residents turn to our public universities as an affordable and effective way to start a new career, learn valuable skills, and begin a better life. Our public universities are anchor institutions in many of our local communities, offering employment, education, and a path to economic empowerment.

Sadly, for grad students and faculty, they remain the only state employees without the right to collectively bargain with their respective administrations. This means that in virtually all decision-making, the professionals who are on the ground at local campuses and working directly with students have no voice. As our faculty leaders will tell you, their working conditions are students' learning conditions. Their lack of a voice has had serious consequences for students, including loss of office hours and access to their instructors outside of class time.

As Maryland looks to recover from COVID, our universities will play a central role. They will not only provide instruction to hardworking Marylanders, but an as yet unforeseen amount of professional retraining for workers who need a fresh start in the new economy. For so many Maryland workers, our universities will be the lifeline they need to recover.

Faculty and staff are the frontline workers of our universities – they interact on a daily basis with students in the classroom, in the dining halls, in the libraries of our institutions of higher learning. They create and maintain the environment in which the scholarship and achievements of our student body happens. Across the state faculty and grad students are demanding that they receive a simple sign of respect in return – to have a voice in their own workplace through collective bargaining.

To guarantee that our public universities provide the structure, atmosphere, and instruction that working Marylanders will need in a post-COVID recovery, it is essential that the educators and staff who work with them day in and day out have a voice at the table. No administration has the first-hand knowledge or expertise that our faculty and grad students will bring to bear in decision making.

I'm asking you today to join us and commit to passing legislation that would grant the right to collectively bargain to university faculty and graduate students.

Thank you for your kind consideration and we ask that you give a favorable report for SB 0247.

Written Testimony for SB 247 favorable Professor

Uploaded by: Clare Lyons

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Clare A. Lyons, Associate Professor of History, University of Maryland
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Clare Lyons and I am a professor of history, at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 26 years.

I call on this committee to issue a favorable report on SB 247, codifying collective bargaining rights to University faculty. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As Professor at the University of Maryland I do the work of a teacher for the State.

Each year I teach 150 undergraduate students in my entry-level courses, teaching critical thinking and analytical writing, as we probe the past and consider its impact on the world we now live in. These courses serve the general education curriculum, with students enrolling across the breadth of majors, from STEM to humanities, the arts and sciences. As students focus their studies on a major, I teach more specialized courses in history, and in gender/women/and sexualities studies. I also instruct graduate students, training the next generation of faculty in the discipline of history, typically working with about 20-25 M.A. and Ph.D. students each year. Like many faculty, I also conduct research, publish books and articles, and provide administrative service in my department and on University committees. My teaching of undergraduates and grad students extends to career support which often leads them to professional training in law, public policy, and government, into academics, and into non-profit work for the public interest.

This teaching work is the very heart of the University. Its core mission is in the hands of teachers like myself, because I have demonstrated the skill and expertise to be entrusted with such work. Surely, teachers like myself are due the basic rights to fair employment, safeguarded by the right to engage in collective bargaining, should we collectively determine to do so.

The right to collective bargaining is a fundamental tenet of a democratic society, and has been responsible for establishing thresholds for safe, fair working conditions since the right was recognized in the early twentieth century. This bill would remove the exemption in Maryland state law, that excludes me, and all teachers at 4-year public institutions, from exercising that right.

There are dozens of reasons for this committee to issue a favorable report, and move this bill to the next stage of consideration. First, is the democratic right for workers to collectively bargain, I have just presented.

I am also concerned about a deterioration of the working conditions, job security, and wages we teachers at Maryland face; and the simultaneous emphasis on non-teaching and administrative spending that promises to make teachers' working conditions worse if they are allowed to continue. Collective bargaining, and even the possibility of such collective action, would bring teachers into the discussions that set these priorities.

Here are just a few troubling trends:

I. Teaching faculty at UMD has shifted from tenure-track Professors, to lower paid, lower status, ranks for teachers, who do the majority of the teaching.

There are currently 1,339 tenured and tenure-track faculty at UMD – These teachers have job security (after 6 years' probation that it takes to earn tenure), that is intended to protect freedom of speech and open discourse and inquiry in research, fundamental to the University's mission. We enjoy the best working conditions, although at lower salaries and poorer benefits than that of our peer institutions at public University nationally.

We have 3,392 "professional track" faculty (PTK) - These teachers were not offered tenure track jobs after earning the Ph.D., earn low wages, and have limited job security, working on short multi-year contracts, ranging from 1 to 5 years. These are the teachers who do the huge majority of the teaching, because the University has made a policy decision to privilege hiring teachers into these ranks, rather than the traditional tenure track.

My PTK colleagues have a teaching work load that is double that of my own, and are thus often unable to conduct research and publish. They are poorly paid. They have no long-term job security. Without tenure they are vulnerable to all the hardships tenure is meant to mediate against.

We also employ part-time faculty, currently approximately 900 at UMD, who work under truly deplorable conditions. These teachers also have earned Ph.D.'s in their field, and have to perform at a high standard as teachers. They are hired semester to semester, like seasonal farm workers, with no job security, paid by the course, typically \$5,000. If they can secure the equivalent teaching load as those at PTK ranks (so 4 courses each semester), they earn \$40,000. Most are cobbling together fewer courses, often working for several different schools in the UM system. And they too are doing the important work of teaching our University students.

This means that 76% of faculty position at UMD are held by non-tenure track faculty, with employment conditions well below those that I, as a tenured faculty member, enjoy. This is not a tenable path forward. We have already seen a trend of the "best and the brightest" making the decision not to go into higher education because it is becoming a non-professional career, poorly paid, without the opportunity to do the important original research that moves our society forward.

Over the twenty-six years I have taught at the University of Maryland, this shift from traditional tenure-track faculty to various levels of temporary, non-tenured faculty has escalated to the point where it is a crisis for the future of higher education. Removing the impediment to collective bargaining by moving this bill forward would give teachers, as state workers, a way to counter this troubling trend.

II. Spending priorities made by the University administrators have favored non-teaching arenas, particularly management.

Since 2015 expenditures on management have increased 50%, significantly increasing salaries, while also adding to the numbers of positions dedicated to administration and not teaching.

In that same period the number of students we serve have increased (by 16% since 2014) and the number of full-time faculty risen by just 3%. More and more of those faculty positions have been filled with lower paid, PTK and part-time teachers, as explained above.

Teaching now accounts for 28.7% of UMD's budget, with another 24.5 % of the budget supporting research.

Faculty currently have no seat at the table in setting priorities or even presenting our experience. This bill would allow us to make use of collective bargaining to change this.

III. UMD faculty salaries are negotiated within the academic unit at the time of employment, and increases (when possible) likewise leveraged by the individual. There are no step increases for faculty who are adjudged to achieved merit in performance reviews, unlike many universities that have such policies. Unsurprisingly, this leads to special treatment and inequities.

In the absence of clear and consistent administration of employment conditions such as salary and workload, discrimination, bias, and preferential treatment takes place. I have experienced this and witnessed it among my colleagues.

I recently served on the internal review committee for my department to evaluate the current status on diversity, equity and inclusion. In that capacity I and another faculty member wrote a survey, for all members of our teaching faculty, to contribute information on their experiences, relating to DEI, anonymously. The majority recorded that they had experienced what they understood to be discrimination or bias in interaction with colleagues and administrators. The specifics ranged from inappropriate comments to inequities in workload and compensation. Sensitivity training and DEI education can redress the insensitive/bias comments; but the issues concerning workload and compensation are the result of having no clearly articulated, uniform, predictable, and enforceable standards.

Here too, the possibility of collective bargaining could encourage equitable treatment.

The state of Maryland has a long history of support for fair, equitable, employment and standing with workers to ensure our voices are part of the conversation as we face difficult issues. The right to collectively bargain is essential for those traditions to continue. I ask that you stand with the University teachers and **support SB 247**.

Respectfully,
Professor Clare A. Lyons
clyons@umd.edu

daniel.greene.pdf

Uploaded by: Daniel Greene

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Daniel Greene, Assistant Professor of Information Studies
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Dr. Daniel Greene and I am an Assistant Professor of Information Studies at the University of Maryland in College Park, where I have worked for 5 years as faculty, and, a decade ago, another six years as a graduate student. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants the right to collectively bargain to nearly every other state employee, as well as our brothers and sisters at our community colleges and the staff in our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I study how technology changes the workplace, and I train the undergraduates and graduate students who go on to fill urgent gaps in our state and national workforce as data scientists and software developers. As a graduate student in 2010-2016, the two classes I taught every semester had nothing to do with my research on labor and technology--I taught classes on everything from pop culture to the history of race and racism--and were never supervised by my advisor. They were simply how I made rent; along with plenty of other odd jobs, from administering SATs to refereeing basketball games. I was lucky to have those--my colleagues here on a student visa are forbidden from working off campus. The dissertation, the thing I was supposedly there to do, was completed on nights and weekends. Of my graduate cohort, I am one of the lucky few to secure a tenure track faculty position--let alone one near my daughter's grandparents! Most of my peers are contingent faculty, teaching four or five classes a semester on semester-to-semester contracts.

After receiving my PhD, I worked at Microsoft. The job was terrific and the money was great (more than I'll make for some time as faculty), but I felt a pull home to serve the great state of Maryland. Especially when some of my old students wrote me in distress after the murder of Richard Collins III on campus. They felt the university wasn't working for everyone. And despite my new job, I have to agree. Our bosses talk about shared governance but there is no shared governance over university budgets. The provost has frozen our college's undergraduate revenue, and as a result, my undergraduate classes rarely have less than fifty students. I cannot train the workforce of the future when I can't even learn their names. Our working conditions are their learning conditions. My peer faculty who are women and people of color do not feel safe speaking up about workplace harassment because, instead of a collective bargaining process where we face management as independent equals, we have various HR systems through which the university can protect itself, rather than its workers. And frankly, a non-union

workplace is not a competitive one. When Maryland acts like conservative, right-to-work state, it prevents me from recruiting the best graduate students, who seek out the security of U Michigan or Berkeley's union contracts, or the best faculty, who worry we won't have any way to fight back when a Republican takes the governor's mansion again and starts banning books like Florida. We need to match the standard set by our peers in New Jersey, California, Illinois, Michigan--where faculty and graduate student unions have long been a part of their vibrant public universities.

I urge the members of this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The right to collective bargaining would put us on equal footing with other state workers, ensuring that we can negotiate with the administration for the resources we need to do our jobs, create safer workplaces, and recruit top students and faculty to our great state. Maryland has long recognized that collective bargaining is a fundamental human right, one that ensures the public sector works not only for its workers but the public at large. We must live up to our labor values within our greatest resource: The universities that are training Maryland's future workers.

Sincerely,
Daniel Greene
Assistant Professor of Information Studies
University of Maryland College park

david.jacobs.pdf

Uploaded by: David Jacobs

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By David Jacobs
Former President, Morgan State University AAUP**

**SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is David Jacobs and I am a retired Full Professor at Morgan State University, where I worked for 15 years. I urge this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, the faculty at our community colleges, and the non-academic workforce at our four year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland as a matter of equity and organizational effectiveness.

In my career at Morgan, I ordinarily taught three classes, both undergraduate and graduate, each term. I was active on committees and sought to exercise voice across campus. As a Human Resource Management scholar, I imagined that my expertise would be valued. However, that was not always the case. I was aware of considerable pay compression and pay inversion in my department and others. In my personal case, my salary with almost forty years of experience was tens of thousands less than that of my junior colleagues. The Administration hired a consulting firm at considerable expense to study pay rather than employ faculty expertise. The result was an inconclusive and even disingenuous report. This is not surprising. University administrations have the same tendency to undervalue their employees as profit-making corporations. Of course, the University community suffers. Rising turnover and declining motivation are the fruits of pay compression and pay inversion. There are corollary effects as managers fear honest interactions with their alienated colleagues.

At University System of Maryland schools, inflation-adjusted salaries for faculty decreased by 4% between FY 2010–2022. Pay issues are system wide.

When an organization is out of balance, with raises for administrators and real wage reductions for employees, the remedy is voice. Faculty have much to contribute, but their needs deserve recognition rather than expedient silence. Collective bargaining is the appropriate mechanism for

guaranteeing voice and redeeming Morgan's potential. It strengthens the fragile systems of faculty governance.

Members of the Committee: Maryland is a state that values collective bargaining and has better public sector organizations as a result. Maryland higher education and Morgan State University as one school among many would benefit from the enhanced faculty voice that collective bargaining provides. Collective bargaining is an internationally recognized human right and a pillar of democracy. It is enshrined in the Constitutions of four states. There is no reason to exempt 4-year public institutions from this practice. Please issue a favorable report on SB 47 and help heal our colleges and universities.

Thank you very much for your attention.

David Jacobs

david.sartorius.pdf

Uploaded by: David Sartorius

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By David Sartorius, Associate Professor of History, University of Maryland-College Park
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is David Sartorius, and I am an associate professor of history at the University of Maryland at College Park, where I have worked since 2007. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants the right of collective bargaining towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a tenured professor, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in the fall and spring semesters represents a fraction of the work that I do. In any given week, I spend far less of my time teaching, researching, and producing scholarship than I do on invisible labor—that is, unremunerated and not contained within my course responsibilities: university committee work and other service obligations at the department, college, and university level; service to my discipline and profession, including committee work for professional organizations, serving on journal editorial boards, and writing evaluations for tenure and promotion; and mentoring, writing letters of recommendation, and reading and editing work in progress for students and colleagues at the University of Maryland and beyond. Despite teaching at our state's flagship public research university, the shrinking number of tenured faculty and the university's well-documented administrative bloat mean that most of my workday is spent on activities besides research and teaching.

I support SB 247 because I believe that faculty governance is vital to the mission of a public university and that collective bargaining is the most effective way to buttress faculty governance in the face of a university administrative apparatus that frequently prioritizes student "revenue" and athletic programs over teaching and research. When I realize that most upper-level administrators earn over \$300,000 per year, I feel the need to advocate for a more just and equitable distribution of compensation at the university, especially when faculty salaries at my rank are between 17 and 58 percent higher at peer institutions. With infrequent merit raises and only two "job title promotion" opportunities in my career, I have limited opportunities and incentives to work harder to earn a higher salary.

Legislatures in other states have aggressively curtailed free speech, tenure, and faculty governance in recent years, and I am proud to work in a state that has long valued its state

university system. Without collective bargaining rights for that system's employees, the promise of public education in Maryland will remain unfulfilled.

SB 247 Favorable Testimony – Deborah Auger.pdf

Uploaded by: Deborah Auger

Position: FAV

February 15, 2023

Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to urge you to lend your **strong support to SB 247**, which would confer the right to collectively bargain to University System of Maryland (USM) full-time faculty, contingent faculty, and graduate student workers.

I speak as a Maryland resident who for 30 years held a tenure track position at the University of Delaware (where higher education employees have collective bargaining rights). And I speak as a parent who supported two of my children through degrees at USM campuses – one a Phi Beta Kappa alum of University of Maryland, College Park, the other an MPH graduate of University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Without collective bargaining rights, USM priorities have grown out of touch with the frontline of the university classroom. More and more funds are being siphoned off to administration, creating an imbalance in priorities where teaching and instruction get the short end of the stick. A recent study found expenditures on administration at the University of Maryland College Park rose by 43.4 % between 2015 and 2019, and have risen even higher in the years since. The average salary for administrators is now more than DOUBLE that of full-time tenure track faculty, a trend echoed at the other USM campuses.

At the same time, inflation-adjusted salaries for full-time tenure track faculty have dropped significantly — leaving them now sitting well BELOW most of our universities' self-selected peer institutions.

And the number of full-time tenure track faculty has eroded as a share of the instructional workforce. My own kids confronted the way this imbalance in administration vs. instructional investment works to the detriment of USM students. Students are increasingly taught by contingent faculty, highly qualified instructors who find themselves stuck in precarious, underpaid positions that make it difficult to devote the time to teaching that stronger benefits and job security would allow for. Students are also increasingly taught by graduate student workers who are stretched thin, overworked and financially stressed by their lack of a livable wage.

University faculty have long highlighted the poor understanding of these working conditions held by administrators who sit too far away from the day to day frontline of instruction. A 2010 formal “meet and confer process” was to have provided a route for greater faculty participation in university priority-setting, but this process has been left unimplemented or largely ignored by most USM campus administrations. Collective bargaining rights are needed.

If Maryland is to meet the future challenges posed by its expanding and diversifying student population, then we must grant collective bargaining rights to these employees. These rights will ensure that the perspectives of frontline faculty and instructional staff are considered more seriously when campus decisions are made. As states like Delaware have shown, collective bargaining in higher education can enhance campus engagement in genuine dialogue, to the betterment of the university, its workers, and its students. Please support the passage of SB 247.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Auger, Ph.D.
505 Idlewild Rd.
Bel Air, MD 21014

diane.luchese.pdf

Uploaded by: Diane Luchese

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Professor Diane Luchese**

SB 247

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am writing to urge you to support SB 247 which would grant collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty and graduate assistants. I am a Towson University Professor who has taught in the University System of Maryland for the past 24 years. Throughout my tenure, I have experienced the absence of collective bargaining as nothing less than frustrating and unfair. The present time is begging for change; even in his State of the Union address this past week, President Joe Biden proclaimed that all American workers should have this right. Our new Governor Wes Moore campaigned on and promised to not leave anyone behind. I am writing to request that you consider supporting this basic democratic right. I consider myself a dedicated employee of the state, and find value and purpose in my work. I work extremely hard and with passion. I am not disgruntled nor discontent, and recognize that problematic situations can arise in any place of employment. That said, the frustrations that my faculty colleagues and I experience without the means for support or advocacy often raises situations to the level of unfair.

I will provide just a few examples I have personally experienced in my tenure in which the right to collective bargaining might be/might have been advantageous:

1. Under the O'Malley administration when state employees were 'furloughed' for a few days during three years. Although aware of the rationale for that decision to lose pay, we were still forced to teach without pay.
2. Our 'workload' progressively and subtly increases yearly without extra salary compensation, due to a myriad of reasons, whether from insufficient staffing, part-time employees replacing retiring tenured faculty, or the more recent addition of mandatory individual student advising.
3. Being forced to teach music to groups of students singing toward me in small classrooms without proper ventilation (and unable to open windows) during COVID19.
4. Many years without COLA adjustments whereby salaries have not kept up with inflation.
5. Despite our location in a major metropolitan area, the average salary at Towson University is and has been lower than the average salary for all our combined peer institutions.
6. Difficulty finding qualified and experienced adjuncts who are willing to work for the extremely low pay per course they receive.

7. Seeing part time adjuncts often left hanging until the last minute without contracts wondering if they will work the next month; 8. witnessing part-time faculty and lecturers in that precarious employment situation feeling unable to risk exercising their right to academic freedom and free speech.
8. Observing the numbers of administrators continually increasing (and receiving high salaries) while the number of tenure track professors as well as badly-needed support staff have decreased.
9. Experiencing the number of graduate assistantships as far too low to attract a healthy graduate population as well as assist faculty. While personally experiencing the above, I fully recognize that my situation is still better than that of lecturers, adjuncts, and graduate students; these populations feel even less the ability to express their concerns without the fear of losing their jobs.

Collective bargaining rights is a necessary step for Maryland university faculty employees to raise our concerns or bring to light injustices, without fear. The collective voice of faculty has been silenced for too long. Collective bargaining would establish a clearer line of communication and complete transparency between faculty and administration. It would open channels for free speech, conflict resolution, debate, fairness, and equity. These rights should not be too much to ask for. Again, I urge you to support bill SB 247.

The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

SB 247 - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Tim

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



METROPOLITAN BALTIMORE COUNCIL

AFL-CIO Unions

**SB 247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and
Graduate Assistants
Senate Finance Committee
February 16, 2023**

SUPPORT

To: Hon. Meloney Griffith, Chair & members of the Senate Finance Committee

From: Courtney Jenkins, President, Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO

Chairwoman and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in **support** of SB 247—*State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants*. My name is Courtney Jenkins, President of the Metropolitan Baltimore AFL-CIO—our coalition represents over 100 affiliated local unions and close to 80,000 proud active union members & retirees in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Harford, and Howard counties and Baltimore City.

With an increase in worker organizing across our state and country, it has become apparent that the right to organize in the workplace is a right that the majority of the public supports. Here in the Baltimore Metropolitan area, we have seen cultural workers at museums and libraries, video game quality control testers, and most recently graduate student workers at Johns Hopkins University seek and win recognition of their union.

The fundamental and constitutional right to organize should be extended to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at our state's higher institutions of learning. In a time when the American public has shown a 70% approval rating for labor unions, the time is now for our state to expand and protect access to the ability to come together to form and join a union. In fact, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), requests for union elections in 2022 increased by 53%. In 2022, the state of Maryland saw one of the largest increases in workers represented by a union—with the fourth largest increase (40,000) in our nation.

SB 247 does not require or mandate faculty, part-time faculty or graduate students to form or join a union; instead the legislation would provide the ability for unorganized workers to exercise their right to form a union and collectively bargain for wages, benefits, and other working conditions if they choose to do so.

For these reasons we ask for a **favorable report on SB 247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants**.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney L. Jenkins, President

SB 247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining -

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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SB 247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Senate Finance Committee

February 16, 2023

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 247. 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.

Lobel_Testimony SENATE 247_2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Elin Lobel

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY OF ELIN E. LOBEL, PHD

BEFORE THE

FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE MARYLAND SENATE

For a hearing on

SENATE BILL 247: “STATE PERSONNEL –COLLECTIVE BARGAINING – Faculty-Part-Time Faculty and Graduate Assistants”

FEBRUARY 13, 2023

FAVORABLE

Chairperson Griffiths, Vice Chairperson Klausmeier, and distinguished members of the Finance Committee:

My name is Dr. Elin E. Lobel and I serve as a Professor in the Department of Kinesiology in the College of Health Professions at Towson University. I am also the current President of the TU American Association of University Professors (AAUP)/Faculty Association, which has stood for more than a half century as the longest continuously operating advocacy chapter in Maryland. For decades, the chapter has been a constructive and integral part of our shared governance model: our Senate bylaws include a designated seat for the TU AAUP President, who is *ex-officio* and voting not only to that body, but also to the Resource Planning and Advisory Committee (RPAC). My discussions with past Presidents and the current membership have led to our unanimous endorsement of this bill. We urge this body to pass Senate Bill 247 to strengthen democracy in our workplace and on all of the University System of Maryland (USM) campuses.

Our chapter supports this bill for many reasons; I present here several key ones.

1. The right to bargain collectively is a justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) issue, integral to protecting academic freedom, as educators reckon with inequalities in our state and beyond.

As a legacy normal school and teaching comprehensive college, Towson has a longstanding track record of producing the largest number of K-12 teachers in our state, so modeling inclusive pedagogies matters for creating equal access to

educational opportunities. While Towson has always served a majority female-identified student population and a significant first-generation college demographic, we are also now a majority students of color campus; this requires being responsive to the evolving learning dynamics.

Faculty need academic freedom to facilitate discussions about the ongoing challenges facing American democracy; this necessitates equal access to due process rights and robust professional development resources. The Provost has agreed with calls for more holistic teaching assessments and supports, given how research suggests student evaluation(s) may perpetuate other discriminatory dynamics.¹ However, it can still be documented as a “cause” cited in unfavorable promotion, tenure, rank and merit (PTRM) letters and a justification for adjunct faculty being non-renewed, without any means to check for biases. Also, the “aspirational R-2” directions Towson intends to take (cf. point five below) will redistribute workloads unevenly, which impacts course caps and teaching assignments, just as the learning needs become more intense and varied.

2. Collective bargaining can enable professional procedures demonstrated to be fair and effective, but currently inaccessible to faculty of all ranks in the USM.

As President of the TU AAUP/Faculty Association, I field a range of workplace circumstances experienced by faculty at all ranks. The most concerning issues arise when an administrator acts in ways that disregard known shared governance norms and procedures. For instance, faculty have been subjected to *ad hoc* requests for meetings and impromptu class visits with insufficient advance notice, without being told the purpose. This needlessly escalates issues into forms of workplace bullying. As a result, faculty sometimes request accompaniment, to make sure someone can take notes during stressful meetings; however, administrators frequently decline such requests, claiming the issue(s) to be a “private personnel matter.” They assert faculty cannot consent to waive their right to privacy with an administrator during professionally consequential meetings. Some of our College of Education faculty have noted unionized K-12

¹ Heffernan, Troy. “Sexism, racism, prejudice, and bias: a literature review and synthesis of research surrounding student evaluations of courses and teaching.” *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*. Volume 47, 2022 - Issue 1, pp. 144-154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2021.1888075>

schools offer educators such rights. We also have adjuncts who have worked at Goucher, McDaniel and MICA, where SEIU Local 500 has used federal NLRB laws to organize contingent faculty. Our educator colleagues elsewhere throughout the state have access to options for accompaniment at meetings that tenure-line and tenured faculty do not consistently have on the Towson campus.

3. The right to bargain collectively can strengthen shared governance by enabling transparent frameworks to negotiate options for conflict resolution.

Some workplace issues reflect power dynamics relevant to the Office of Inclusion and Institutional Equity (OIIE), particularly when a situation personally and professionally harms faculty, as they are then “gagged” by Human Resources (HR) from publicly discussing the issues. This works at cross-purposes with efforts to train “inclusion advocates” to serve on hiring committees, if little is done to support diverse faculty *after* they are hired. Further, the administration has implemented at TU Faculty Gradual Intervention Guidelines or F-GIGs, which have raised serious concerns. Some assume that Faculty Grievance and shared governance mechanisms adjudicate such situations, but even when they rule by majority vote the F-GIG should not go into a personnel file, the Provost Office can unilaterally overrule a faculty committee decision. If faculty have no equivalent complaint filing option against administrators, F-GIGs should be regarded an unfair labor practice. The TU AAUP/Faculty Association proposed a half decade ago a motion to the Academic Senate recommending that the Provost Office commit to hiring an Ombuds, like they have at College Park. Despite overwhelming support, the administration does not view this as a priority, even though it could make a real difference to a range of workplace culture challenges.

4. Collective bargaining rights would prompt clearer decision-making protocols, to discourage inconsistent implementation of health and wellness policies.

As is true for many workplaces, the pandemic highlighted a range of ways HR fields ADA, FMLA and parental leave issues in inconsistent ways; faculty are then limited in how they can use grievance mechanisms when the issues turn into other PTRM-related issues. The senate Faculty Compensation Review Committee does not currently factor how these issues impact salary compression and

inversion, as well as other benefits and workload considerations. The administration otherwise claims these are mainly a “collegiality” coverage issue, which does not acknowledge situations when someone may be the only faculty member who teaches a specialized topic or subject area, nor does it acknowledge how faculty rank differences lead to unequal access to accommodations otherwise extended to most staff and students on the campus.

5. The right to bargain collectively can ensure TU earns its R-2 stripes in responsible and sustainable ways for faculty, staff, and graduate students alike.

Faculty of all ranks have worked tirelessly to make it possible for the USM to affirm Towson’s aspirational R-2 status.² Despite reassurances that the R-2 goals would mainly impact new hires and benefit faculty who prefer reduced teaching loads to focus on research, some are already being subjected to vague standards that require them to formulate professional development plans different from past expectations. Furthermore, R-2 becomes invoked as the impetus for changes, but administrators delegate actual implementation to shared governance entities at the department, college, and university level. This means R-2 peer institution comparisons have not yet been put into relevant context(s) with few specifics on ways to support impacted faculty, staff, and graduate students (i.e., we’re told produce x-PhDs in x-time and document x-research expenditures without knowing yet the qualitative metrics at issue).

Former TU President, Kim Schatzel, who took a position as of February, 2023, at the University of Louisville (an R-1 institution), recently co-authored an *Inside Higher Education* piece, “R-2 for Good,” in which she affirmed “[r]ather than being an either-or choice—teaching students or conducting research—we see rampant ‘anding’.”³ At a town hall last year, she quoted UMBC’s President

² Towson has in recent decades elevated its research profile in a range of fields of significance to the local economy. In 2018, Carnegie reclassified Towson as a “Doctoral/Professional University” or a D/PU; challenges associated with the global pandemic contributed to our recent loss of that status, though the administration informed us in the middle of the pandemic the USM had thought a next step for our institution should be R-2 status, a direction that surprised even the Board of Regents, who noted we first had to change our institutional mission to include more of a research focus for new doctoral programs to be approved.

³ Kim Schatzel and KerryAnn O'Meara, “R-2 For Good,” *Inside Higher Ed*, January 04, 2023.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2023/01/04/pursuit-r-2-status-can-expand-opportunity-opinion>

Emeritus, Freeman Hrabowski, noting we should embrace the harmony of the “and” and not the tyranny of the “or,” because R-2 and diversity go hand-in-hand. When faculty agreed but prompted for more specifics given our challenges recruiting and retaining hires, including in her own administrative offices, she then invoked “The Great Resignation” as if the cause, weeks before she herself would resign to take a job for around double her compensation at Towson. The right to bargain collectively could provide important checks and balances on administrators who expect faculty “to do as I say, *and* not as I do.”

On behalf of the TU AAUP/Faculty Association, I urge you to vote for this bill and allow faculty at all and any rank to choose whether or not they want to use collective bargaining to improve their working conditions. You will be demonstrating your commitment to higher education as a public good and acknowledging that employees and employers together know best how to continue developing the institutions that expand and communicate knowledge for the benefit of the entire community.

I thank you for considering these thoughts and enthusiastically reaffirm our chapter’s endorsement of this bill.

GSG Written testimony for collective bargaining (1

Uploaded by: Elizabeth Irlbacher

Position: FAV



The Graduate Student Government (GSG) at the University of Maryland-College Park call upon the Maryland General Assembly in support of House Bill 0275 and Senate Bill 0247 that removes the ban on collective bargaining for graduate students across the University System of Maryland. As of December 2022, the graduate student government assembly passed a resolution to support collective bargaining rights for graduate student workers. This is to succeed the past four years of support for collective bargaining by the graduate student government. As a university system, our belief is that the USM has fallen behind in upholding the values of equity, fairness in labor when it comes to the collective work that graduate students perform for the university. Since 2016 when unionization for graduate students was granted for all private universities by the National Labor Review Board, the number of students in graduate unions has markedly increased. In the DMV, American University, Georgetown University, George Washington University, and John Hopkins University all support a graduate student union. Within the Big10 Michigan State, Northwestern University, Rutgers University, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, University of Iowa, University of Michigan, and the University of Wisconsin- Madison all have graduate student unions. At Big 10 institutions that do not have a union, Indiana University Bloomington, Purdue University, and the University of Nebraska have student groups actively pushing for one. Additionally, the entire University of California system has a graduate student union as do all Ivy League institutions. Maryland is falling behind in efforts to protect graduate students from abuse and give them a voice. Due to the current restrictions passed in 2001, it is illegal for graduate students in the University of Maryland systems to even have a vote determining if they want a union or not. This bill offers the first step towards a democratic process that recognizes the work that graduate students perform for the university system.

As the President and Vice President of Legislative Affairs, we have seen situations where students need an advocate but do not know where they can go for one. This is especially true for our international students. One example was brought to us last fall. An international student was working as a graduate assistant as a Teaching Assistant (TA) for a lower level class. The professor for the class required the student to grade 60 problem sets within 24-hours despite the TA having their own classes during that time. That led to the TA not sleeping at night after the class they TA met, seeing this was twice a week it was a significant amount of sleep. This TA also fell behind in one of their own classes. When the TA tried to ask for flexibility the professor threatened to go to the department if the TA was not performing up to standards. The issue is that there are no standards. Graduate assistants do not get contracts. That means our work load, duties, expectations, or grievance procedures are all on a case-by-case basis. There is a Statement of Mutual Expectations that is supposed to be filled out by the graduate assistant and their

supervisor. But that rarely happens. There are also many instances of the supervisor filling it out without any input from the graduate assistant. From there, it is up to the individual graduate student to stand up for themselves and the department to sort it out. In the case above, the student did not know if the department would be on their side or not. It was their first semester at the university. They thought since the professor was requiring it that it would be accepted, that speaking up would cause the department to not support them anymore, and they would lose their assistantship, not be able to afford their education, and possibly be forced to leave the country. This student needed someone to go to while the situation was going on who they knew could advocate for them without putting the individual at risk. The student also needed to know from other students what sorts of requirements were and were not okay. The most efficient way to establish this is by having a union that graduate students know they can go to for questions and advocacy.

In another way a union can greatly benefit graduate students is when negotiating leaves of absences, especially for maternity leave. Currently, the graduate school provides six-weeks of parental leave for new parents. While we must give credit to the university for applying this to new parents who did not give birth, for those that do it is insufficient. For longer maternity leave it is either up to the discretion of the department the graduate student works under or they need to have a medical exemption from a doctor. Department discretion varies greatly across the university. When negotiating with the department it is on the individual graduate student to ask for longer leave. Medical exemptions are good policy, but they have been denied in the past even with a doctor's note. A new mother has to then negotiate her workload, trying to appeal the exemption denial, a new baby, and recovering from child birth by herself. Someone who is authorized to advocate on her behalf, who knows the university systems, and is able to bring up the issue without the fear of retaliation is necessary. The university will say the student can take a leave of absence. Being a graduate assistant means that you give up your assistantship including pay, tuition remission, and your health insurance.

One thing that may have stood out in this testimony is that the word department is coming up a lot. UMD College Park has a very decentralized administrative system, which includes the ways that graduate assistantships are managed and administered. While this brings up obvious issues of different systems of accountability, different interpretations of policy, and overall different experiences, it also increases the inherent risk that a graduate student takes on when coming forward with an issue. Most graduate assistants are working in the department they are getting their academic degree in, often under their PhD advisor. As in the case of the international student, they often live in fear of falling out of favor with their department, inciting implications for their work status, student status, and by extension even their citizenship status. Losing that favor could mean losing your assistantship in the future, being bottom of the list when it comes to department grants, fellowships, and scholarships, not being recommended for academic or professional opportunities, and having an overall hostile work and academic environment. Many students, especially in PhD programs or international students, cannot leave their program without serious repercussions. It is rare for students in PhD programs to leave and

be accepted into another program of a similar caliber. International students would have to leave the country if they stopped their program. What this creates is a situation where graduate assistants who are getting abused are afraid to speak up.

There are efforts being made by the university to change this, but they cannot reverse a structural issue. The Graduate Student Government can help a student with some parts of university administration, but overall do nothing more than bring up an issue to someone higher up on behalf of students and has no way to ensure that issues are resolved. The current substitute program, the meet-and-confer process with the Graduate Assistant Advisory Council, is a poor and ineffective substitute. While there have been concessions made to graduate students, such as one-time stipend increases and some policy changes, this does little to rectify the pervasive culture of oppression across campus, particularly for those students from marginalized identity groups. Without formalized processes such as go-to human resources administrators, a verifiable contract that can be referred to, and a unionized body to back graduate students, the refrain of many graduate students is “head down, don’t rock the boat.”

In conclusion, this bill is about taking the first step towards a right that has been granted in the United States for almost 100 years. In a period of time where democracy seems to vulnerably hang in the balance, we call upon the Maryland General Assembly to recognize the contributions of over 5,000 graduate student workers across the University System of Maryland as true labor - as work that contributes to the research, innovation, and progress forward of the flagship institution of the state of Maryland. By approving House Bill 0275 and Senate Bill 0247, you are recognizing that power and decisions must be afforded to those at all levels of the hierarchy, creating a collaborative foundation of trust between administrations and those that work to uphold them.

Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Ellia Khan

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By [Ellia Khan, M.A.]

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Ellia Khan, and I am a Teaching Assistant at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where I have been working since August 2021. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

During my one and a half years at UMBC, I have been a Teaching Assistant for eight different courses. The number of students for these classes have ranged from 30 to 60. My responsibilities as a Teaching Assistant do not relate to my work towards my degree, particularly since I have had to assist on courses that are not relevant to my field of interest. The 20 hours I am required to work every week involves grading assignments, holding weekly office hours, addressing students' queries over emails, maintaining attendance records, designing rubrics for grading, providing exam review sessions, and proctoring exams, among many other responsibilities. I have also been required to turn over grades for multiple assignments with detailed feedback within 12 hours twice a week for an entire semester. These duties interfere with my ability to focus on my research work and hinder my ability to progress in the program in a timely manner.

Since I am an international student, I am only allowed to work for 20 hours every week. I am also on a nine-month contract, so I do not have funding for three months of the year. I am also not allowed any time off. Additionally, I am not allowed to work off campus. I am also not eligible to apply for any research grants or fellowships since I am not a U.S. citizen. This puts me and other students like me in a very precarious position. The compensation I receive as a Teaching Assistant is not livable or reflective of the services I provide to the university. As a result, I am constantly worried about meeting my basic needs, and unable to participate in several different career opportunities because of financial constraints. For example, I give up on opportunities to present at conferences, which are a requirement for my degree, because I cannot afford to travel.

Academic institutions should be inclusive spaces that set examples for the larger society to continue to do better. Unfortunately, by withholding graduate students' right to collectively bargain, we are withholding access to numerous resources and telling students that only those with power and privilege can progress in academia. I support this bill because I want a livable wage and so that I can progress in my degree.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Eric Stull Testimony SB 0247 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Eric Stull

Position: FAV

February 16, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 0247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Support

Chairwoman Griffith and Senate Finance Committee Members,

My name is Eric Stull, and I live in the city of Baltimore. I am an adjunct professor at Bowie State University. I support bill SB 0247 to extend collective bargaining rights to all faculty at all institutions within the University System of Maryland. We deserve this most basic right to decide for ourselves whether we want to be represented by a union, a right so fundamental that over hundreds of thousands of other public-sector workers, including community-college professors, already enjoy it. Teachers and others who work at the state's universities should never be denied such a basic right. It's a scandal that we have been denied it for so long.

The COVID pandemic laid bare the manifold absurdity of being an adjunct professor in Maryland; in the aftermath of the pandemic, things have only gotten worse. During the first two summers of the pandemic, I had to wait weeks and weeks to receive unemployment benefits and had to enlist the help of state senators to get them, which I finally did only at the end of the summer when it was time to begin preparing for the fall term; I spent an hour and a half on the phone with unemployment this morning trying to reopen a claim so that I could get benefits for the six weeks between the fall and spring semesters. Whether I will receive them is still undetermined. What ignorant people consider a cushy summer break for teachers amounts to four miserable months without pay for adjuncts, who are already so sickeningly underpaid as to receive at most half of what salaried faculty make for teaching the same courses for which students pay the same tuition and receive the same credit that those same regular-faculty colleagues receive a salary for teaching. Early in the pandemic, I had to purchase my own Zoom account to cut through the bureaucracies of public institutions, and indeed, simply to deal with the difficulty of *having to teach*, as I often have, at more than one institution at the same time to make ends meet. For the last year and a half, I have taught at two USM schools, primarily at Bowie State, where I am in my sixth consecutive semester. In most of those semesters, I have not received my first paycheck of the semester on time. In each case, this is after going months without a paycheck. I received my last paycheck for the fall semester on December 14. I am due to receive my first spring-semester check on February 22, but probably won't, because yet again, through no fault of mine, contracts were not processed on time. This is now routine; it happened last fall, too. We don't even receive the courtesy of being told our first check will be late. Thus, I probably won't be paid until March, almost three months after my last check – with four kids to provide for. At the end of last September, Gov. Hogan announced a cost-of-living adjustment for all state employees to take effect on November 1. He loudly emphasized the word **all** in his press release, of which I have a screenshot taken hours before Gov. Moore was inaugurated. In late October, high-level administrators at Bowie State acknowledged that adjunct faculty were in fact state employees, but still denied us the COLA, saying that they could not find the \$250,000 to meet the need, this

despite the fact that the university is taking in millions every year as a result of the settlement of the coalition lawsuit. The outlay to cover the COLA would go toward a small, but desperately needed, increase to hundreds of adjunct faculty; such an outlay is probably in the ballpark of the single salary paid to the university's provost. Yet still we have been denied. Five days before classes started last week, I was told my spring teaching load was being cut in half from four courses to two. These cuts come without warning and without cushion; you're simply thrown out on your ear. Instead of \$14,000, I will make \$7,000 for my fifteen weeks of work teaching a few dozen students the soft arts of reading, writing, and conversation, which do nothing important except uphold democracy. I could go on and on like this. The less surprised I am by each predatory injustice that tops the last, the more shocked I constantly am by the utter barbarism of the big picture. I could go on and in this vein for many, many pages – I could easily fill a book -- describing the nauseatingly inane institutional dysfunction and the mindless administrative arrogance that I have observed while teaching thousands of students over more than sixteen years at five public institutions in Maryland, two community colleges and three USM universities. If an intelligent being were to fall out of the sky and come to understand the way teachers are treated in public higher education in this state, one of the richest in this richest of countries, he would have no choice but to conclude that the state had decided that stupidity was cheaper than minimal decency toward public servants. I ask you, when you look around this country and this state today, does stupidity seem cheaper than common decency? If your answer to that question is yes, by what notion of cost do you operate? Is such a notion a human one?

That it is self-defeating for any system of education to mistreat its own teachers is like saying that trying to improve my appearance by cutting off my nose will cut off my purpose at the same time. Collective bargaining would give those who teach a say over the terms of our own work: it would give us more stability in our departments, more standing on the curricula that adjuncts (more than anyone else) teach, more ability to offer the robust talents which the current institutional strait-jacketing crimps, cramps, constrains, and cannibalizes. The power to negotiate the terms of our work will help us do our work better, which will help students learn more and do better. Improving the lot of people who work improves the work those people do. The health and housing insecurities, and sundry other forms of material marginality that adjunct work constantly imposes on many adjuncts, despite the daily heroics those same people perform to overcome them, are terrible for our schools of higher ed, which will eventually crumble under the weight of these atrocious inequities if something isn't done about them. It ought to be obvious that this is profoundly dangerous for democracy. Please do something about these things now while you can.

I ask you to vote YES on SB 0247, and I strongly urge a favorable committee report.

Respectfully,

Eric Stull

erica.blum.pdf

Uploaded by: Erica Blum

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Erica Blum, PhD Candidate and Graduate Assistant**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Erica Blum and I am a PhD candidate and graduate assistant in the Department of Computer Science at University of Maryland College Park, where I have worked since 2018. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I have worked for 2 semesters as a teaching assistant and 7 semesters as a research assistant. University administrators have sometimes argued that research assistants should be excluded from collective bargaining because the work that we do is directly tied to our dissertation research; however, for me and many of my peers, there is much more to the job than just dissertation research. As a research assistant, I am usually working on 3-5 different research projects; only a few of these projects are part of the dissertation research needed for my PhD. My work on these projects includes identifying open research problems, developing and evaluating solutions, and writing up results for publication. In addition to research, I also do work that supports my department (supervising undergraduate research, organizing seminars, serving on department committees, recruiting prospective graduate students) and my academic community (peer reviewing for journals and conferences in my field).

In many other sectors across the state, we have seen that collective bargaining leads to better outcomes for workers and for the communities and institutions we serve. Removing the exemption for 4-year public institutions is a critical first step toward securing important rights and protections for all public higher education workers in Maryland. For these reasons, I call for a favorable report to SB 247.

eva.hageman.pdf

Uploaded by: Eva Hageman

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Eva Hageman, Assistant Professor**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Eva Hageman and I am Assistant Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 5 years. I am writing to express my strongest support of the right of faculty, part-time faculty, graduate assistants, and all workers to collective bargaining. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland. The exclusion of faculty and workers who are also graduate students is unacceptable.

Indeed, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to support democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, including those in other Big Ten institutions, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. Now is the time for Maryland to join our peers in ensuring the rights of ALL workers.

I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Sincerely,

Eva Hageman

Assistant Professor, Department of American Studies, and the Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, University of Maryland

(provided for identification purposes only)

fred.azizi.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Fred Azizi, Graduate Assistant

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

it is a legal right for graduate students in many other states and illegal for us in the great state of Maryland. I believe that we deserve the right to engage in collective bargaining for several reasons. Firstly, it would provide us with a level of job security and stability that is currently lacking. We would be able to negotiate fair wages and benefits that are in line with other universities standards and our contributions to our universities. Additionally, it would give us a platform to raise concerns and address any issues we may have with our working conditions. Furthermore, collective bargaining is a proven way to improve the overall working conditions and quality of life for employees. Studies have shown that workers who are able to negotiate their terms and conditions through collective bargaining have better pay, benefits, and working conditions compared to those who do not.

Sincerely,
Fred Azizi
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frederick.mills.pdf

Uploaded by: Frederick Mills

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Frederick Mills, PhD

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Frederick Mills and I am professor of philosophy at Bowie State University (BSU) where I have been working full time since 1996. I am also President of the BSU chapter of the AAUP and a member of our campus constitution committee. I have also served on the BSU faculty senate for more than a decade. I urge this committee to issue a favorable report for SB 247. The right to collectively bargain in this state applies to most state employees, including faculty at community colleges. There are good reasons why this right should also be extended to all faculty labor in higher education in Maryland.

I have been active in shared governance bodies on the BSU campus for more than 25 years. I teach both face-to-face and online courses in philosophy, including ethics and public policy. I also conduct research in the ethics of liberation and serve as volunteer deputy director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs. I focus my argument for granting collective bargaining rights to higher education workers based on the need to fortify shared governance and dignify the labor of all instructors, including part-time faculty.

We need to fortify shared governance. The principles of shared governance and academic freedom, which are informed by AAUP policy and incorporated into the University System of Maryland (USM) bylaws as well as faculty handbooks across the state, allots primary responsibility to faculty in academic matters such as the content of courses; the hiring, evaluation, and promotion of faculty; and program development. The USM policy states

“Each institution shall define the subject matter appropriate for faculty, staff, and/or student participation in the shared governance process. The definitions shall recognize [as it pertains to faculty]: The central role of the faculty in the institution's teaching, research, and outreach programs, including the assessment of the quality of these activities through peer review.” (Bylaws: I, 6.00, 3, c. 5)

Our BSU faculty handbook, in compliance with I, 6.00,3, c.5 states:

The faculty handbook and the [University System of Maryland bylaws](#) (I - 6.00 Policy on shared governance) are informed by the AAUP’s *1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*. ...It calls for shared responsibility among the different components of institutional government and specifies areas of primary responsibility for governing boards, administrations, and faculties.

What are these shared responsibilities? The AAUP's [1966 Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities](#) states:

"The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process."

These are good policies, but without the right to collectively bargain, faculty lack sufficient recourse to curtail the erosion of shared governance and academic freedom and depend on the good will of administration. It is a one-sided bargain that too often undermines the appropriate exercise of our primary responsibilities. The right to collectively bargain can provide the mechanism to fortify shared governance and enhance the spirit of collaboration between faculty and administration in pursuit of a common mission.

We have had occasions over the past decades, at BSU, when administration refused to recognize the elected members of the faculty senate or appointed advisory committees that circumvented shared governance bodies and procedures. In [2010](#), for example, it was only with a great organizing effort by faculty and the intervention of the Board of Regents, that our shared governance bodies persevered.

Most recently our departments and instructors have had very limited input into changes in the management of academic computing which, since the pandemic and the expanded use of virtual classrooms, has become an essential instrument in the development of online and hybrid courses. During a health emergency, our academic departments and faculty lost a significant measure of control over course content and the pedagogical tools used for their delivery. This clearly violates the policy of our faculty handbook, which states:

Freedom of teaching. ...Faculty members must be able to disseminate to their students the results of pertinent research, by themselves and others in their profession. They must also be free to train students to think about these results for themselves, often in an atmosphere of controversy that, as long as it remains, in a broad sense, educationally relevant, actively assists students in mastering the subject and appreciating its significance. **Freedom of teaching includes both subject matter and choice of pedagogical tools, including technology.** (BSU Faculty Handbook, 5.5.1.3, bold added)

A collective bargaining unit could help clarify and establish the appropriate balance between respect for academic freedom and the legitimate need for administrative oversight of academic computing.

Another reason for the urgency of passing this bill is the need to dignify part time academic labor. Our faculty senate voted unanimously in January 2023 to pass a resolution that "All BSU Faculty, including Contingent I Faculty (i.e, Adjunct Faculty), Receive the 4.5% COLA Effective in MD for All State Employees on 1 November 2022." The context was the announcement by Governor Hogan that all state employees would receive a 4.5% COLA to commence on Nov. 1, 2022. Since contingent I faculty are state employees, as BSU's administration acknowledges, and they are already insufficiently remunerated for their labor by both market standards and any conceivable measure of economic justice, the senate

resolved to "strongly urge administration to honor its own acknowledgement that Contingent I faculty are state employees and accord all BSU Faculty, including Contingent I Faculty, the 4.5% COLA announced by the Governor to commence on 1 November 2022." It is not clear why our individual campus denied the COLA increase without faculty input. The sad reality is that despite already low pay and inflation, some contingent workers must work at several institutions teaching six or seven courses and still cannot make ends meet. That is not good for them or students. If faculty at BSU had the right to collectively bargain, including contingent faculty, contingent faculty at BSU would have had a better chance to obtain this modest and long overdue COLA increase. Some contingent faculty have been part of our academic community for more than two decades. They ought to be treated as such.

I urge you to vote for SB247 and grant faculty at any rank the right to choose for themselves whether collective bargaining can fortify shared governance and academic freedom and advance the cause of just compensation for all instructors in higher education.

SB247GannonSprinkleSGA_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Gannon Sprinkle

Position: FAV

Committees: Appropriations

Testimony on: SB247

Position: Favorable

10 February 2023

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and the members of the Appropriations Committee,

The University of Maryland, Student Government Association supports SB247 in granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and certain graduate students at the following institutions: the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or the St. Mary's College of Maryland. This bill is significant because it protects collective bargaining procedures and creates separate units for higher education systems.

Collective bargaining is a fundamental human right recognized by international law and essential to ensuring fair working conditions and equitable compensation. All workers, including graduate students, have the right to join together and negotiate with their employers for better pay, benefits, and working conditions. By denying graduate students the ability to collectively bargain, we are depriving them of their basic human right to freely associate and negotiate for their well-being. Allowing graduate students to participate in collective bargaining not only respects their human rights, but it also empowers them to advocate for themselves and improve their working conditions, ultimately benefiting the entire academic community.

These are our workers, our students, our peers, and our community. We need to promote them, especially as policy makers, it's your job to protect their interests. They build the financial system you protect. Enacting this policy would demonstrate a commitment to supporting the well-being and professional development of graduate students, who are integral to the success of universities. They are our lifeline. Support them.

I respectfully request a favorable vote on SB247.

Thank you,



Gannon Sprinkle
Student Government Association
University of Maryland — College Park,
cthorne@terpmail.umd.edu

hanyu.wang.pdf

Uploaded by: Hanyu Wang

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Hanyu Wang, Research Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

As a member of the academic community, I think it's critical for professors and graduate assistants to have input on choices that affect their employment and pay. Granting them the right to bargain collectively would give them the power to negotiate with their bosses in a fair manner, securing the resources and support needed to keep delivering top-notch education. Additionally, this law would foster equality and justice in academia, enabling faculty and graduate assistants to bargain for fair salaries, perks, and working conditions comparable to those at other academic establishments.

Sincerely,
Hanyu Wang
Research Assistant
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hariharan.jayashankar.pdf

Uploaded by: Hariharan Jayashankar

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Hariharan Jayashankar, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

There doesn't seem to be an obvious way to negotiate wages or voice concerns without fear. I believe graduate students, TAs, RAs and part time faculty are relied upon much more than what their salaries would indicate.

Sincerely,
Hariharan Jayashankar
Graduate Assistant
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heidi.cm.scott.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Dr. Heidi Scott, Faculty Assistant and Senior Lecturer**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Dr. Heidi Scott and I am a Faculty Assistant and Senior Lecturer at The University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked and learned for 15 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our four-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

In my work at UMD as a professional-track faculty member, I've been a Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Assistant Clinical Professor, and a Faculty Assistant. Only in the first two titles have I had any chance of promotion and renewal; the other titles have been limited-term, with no renewals or promotions. I'd like to speak specifically to one situation: my time as an Assistant Clinical Professor in the vaunted University Honors Program, which I held for a 3-year limited term from 2019-2022. (The program has changed the position title to "Visiting Assistant Professor" to provide cover for their short non-renewable contracts.) Despite the lavish funding of the program, which is designed to recruit the highest-level high school graduates to UMD instead of an Ivy-league rival, the faculty have no promotion or renewal potential. We know our end date as soon as we begin, and this hopelessness kills faculty morale, the possibility of developing program culture, and leads to a lot of early attrition. There's no governance structure to include the faculty in the design and operation of the program -- all is controlled by administrative staff. While faculty are "cycled out" based on their contract expiration date, the non-teaching administrative staff have enjoyed promotions of title and pay, all while boasting of the program's success to higher-level administrators. They boast across the bent backs of their faculty, who teach some of UMD's most promising students within a toxic work environment of temporary, precarious, employment. I have been teaching continuously at the college level since I earned my Ph.D in 2009, but my experience, my teaching award, my two published books and numerous scholarly articles – none of that matters to this administrative establishment. In order to ensure my continued employment, I worked as an Adjunct instructor at American University while still working full-time for UMD.

I support SB 247 because it would give a collective voice to the nearly 4,000 professional-track faculty that UMD relies upon to teach 70% of its courses. We are experienced professionals with terminal degrees and status within our fields – but in many departments we fail to make a living wage. PTK faculty have little representation in the University Senate and in many cases

absolutely no governance role in the programs to which we've devoted years of our professional lives. As the administrative ranks bloat with more high-salary but non-teaching positions, we on the front lines of student education are left wondering whether we will have any job in the upcoming semester. Students suffer from the lack of program culture, the low morale of their instructors, and a stunning arrogance shown by the administrative staff regarding their instructors' plight.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher education institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

isabella.lucy.giovannelli.pdf

Uploaded by: Isabella Lucy Giovannelli

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Isabella Giovannelli

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Isabella and I am a graduate research assistant at the University of Maryland (College Park), where I have worked for 2 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

During my first year at UMD I was a graduate teaching assistant where I taught one class in the fall and one class in the spring. I transitioned to being a graduate research assistant that summer. None of the research I conduct at this point is directly related to my thesis, (I don't have a clear thesis project at this point). Most of the research I have done has been done in order to either maintain research funding for my lab or train myself in necessary lab skills. The work I do in this assistantship is different from my work towards my degree since the assistantship often requires me to do side projects that are separate from any dissertation research (these side projects sometimes take whole semesters). The results of these large side projects are used to maintain funding for the lab and aren't directly applicable to any thesis projects.

From my experience, a lot of professors don't see PhD programs as apprenticeships, but rather as a means of getting cheap labor. Professors typically expect their graduate students to work 40+ hours a week on research while we are only paid for part time work. It is very difficult to find a professor that is actually invested in mentoring their graduate students. The expectation in most research groups is that you, as a graduate student, are already ready for the labor force and are here to just be exploited. I've seen fellow graduate students get fired from labs for simply not knowing everything and not producing enough "publishable" results within their first semester of joining a lab. This bill is important to me because I think we have a right to have more of a means of protecting ourselves from abuse and exploitation. More often than not, we are treated as workers not as students, but are not granted those same rights/protections.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as an effective means of enforcing democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices are heard and acted on. It is a right granted to many other public higher education institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path only serves to further make graduate assistants vulnerable to exploitation. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

jade.olson.pdf

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Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Jade Olson, Senior Lecturer, University of Maryland - College Park
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Jade Olson and I am a senior lecturer at the University of Maryland - College Park, where I have worked for 13 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a full-time contingent (professional track or “PTK”) faculty member, I teach 8-10 courses per year and complete an extensive amount of service to my department, college, and to the university as a whole. The approximately 3,400 PTK faculty at the University of Maryland - College Park teach about 70% of the credit hours on our campus. My teaching workload is twice what a typical tenured or tenure-track faculty member is assigned. It has taken several years for me to get to a point where this is my sole institutional appointment. For many years, I was unable to count on adequate course assignments at the University of Maryland and relied on teaching on an ad hoc basis at other schools in order to make ends meet. This is not an unusual situation; most of my colleagues currently teach at 2-3 different institutions.

PTK faculty like me face a wide variety of working conditions, many of which are unequitable. Some departments properly enforce university policies on appointment and evaluation, but others do not. Contingent faculty members’ contracts are routinely violated with little or no accountability. We often learn about our teaching assignments just days or weeks in advance, making it difficult to plan financially and to prepare a robust curriculum. In many cases, PTK faculty do not have access to office spaces where we can do our work and meet with students; little or no support is available to purchase books, present our research at conferences, or to engage in professional development opportunities. Most faculty in my role either have a semester- or year-long contracts. This lack of security creates strong disincentives to speak out about our working conditions. Such precarious conditions make us less effective educators.

Enacting SB 247 would create greater stability, equity, and transparency for Maryland’s higher education workers like me. Our state has long viewed collective bargaining as the best way to ensure shared governance. It is a right already granted to workers at many institutions of higher education in our state, both public and private. For these reasons, I call for a favorable report to SB 247.

janelle.wong.pdf

Uploaded by: Janelle Wong

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Janelle Wong, Professor, UMCP**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Janelle Wong and I am a Professor at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for more than a decade. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I am a joint appointment in three different units - Government and Politics, American Studies and Asian American Studies. I serve as Director of Asian American Studies. This semester I am teaching two courses, attending department meetings in two departments and one program, serving on multiple graduate student committees, serving on multiple department and college-level committees, writing letters of recommendation for students and colleagues, and supervising three faculty and two full-time staff. I am also committed to a full research agenda, developing and fielding surveys on the political attitudes and behaviors of multiple racial groups, conducted in an array of languages (Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese). This is all to say I am fully-invested in the mission of the University of Maryland.

Serving our state and students at the University of Maryland, College Park has been the highlight of my career after teaching at Seattle University, the University of Southern California, and Yale University. And yet I am convinced that the University of Maryland can even be stronger with the right to collective bargaining.

Research has shown that collective bargaining can enhance the relationship between the administration and graduate students or faculty members by creating clearer and more transparent lines of communication. It also promotes equity and supports democratic decision-making.

And, I am particularly troubled by the working conditions of the Professional Track Faculty. These instructional faculty are expected to teach a full course load of 4-4, double the workload of tenure-track faculty. Additionally, there are nearly 900 part-time instructors at the University of Maryland who often earn less than \$5,000 for a 16-week course and work at multiple campuses. Regrettably, university policies related to appointments and contracts are not properly enforced and are enforced inconsistently across departments, leading to potential violations.

Collective-bargaining is an important tool for all of us to improve the working conditions of Professional Track Faculty.

Our public education institutions, including the University of Maryland, serve as critical examples of democratic governance. The right to collective bargaining has long been recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also been seen as the best way to ensure that employee voices play a role in shaping workplace conditions. This right has been granted to many other public higher education institutions in the country, as well as many private, prestigious institutions in our state. There is no valid reason to exempt four-year public institutions from this path. I therefore urge a favorable report on SB 247.

sb0247-testimony-archer.pdf

Uploaded by: Jan-Michael Archer

Position: FAV

Melony G. Griffith, Chair
Katherine A. Klausmeier, Vice Chair
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East Wing
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

SB0247
Supporting

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Members of the legislature, I am writing to ask that you vote in support of SB0247. Having studied at the University of Maryland-College Park for five years, I would like to share my experience as a doctoral graduate research assistant. The standard agreement for all graduate assistantships is that the student will assist their supervisor's research tasks for an average of 20 hours per week. In Fall 2018, my first semester, I learned that this agreement was not enforceable. When I expressed my concern over regularly being made to work 40-60 hours per week, my supervisor casually chided me, saying "20 hours per week is unreasonable. It just doesn't happen for doctoral students." I was subsequently shamed in public meetings and accused of being uncommitted to the "very important work" of the lab. By late 2019, I had already written 12 grant applications, drafted 3 manuscripts, managed 6 projects, mentored 15 undergraduate students, and given dozens of presentations at conferences and meetings—all in addition to taking regular academic courseloads. Nevertheless, I was consistently told that I was not working hard enough. That *I* was not enough.

When I brought these concerns to my department chair and unit director, I was informed that "it is known" that my supervisor regularly overworks their students and that I should come up with my own plan for moving forward. My supervisor would later reprimand me for "going over [his] head." Fearing retribution, I made no further public complaints. However, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic made this situation virtually untenable. Like many, I lost several family members to the disease; many of them older adults who had been in my life since childhood. Citing the ever-increasing workload, my supervisor discouraged me from taking time to heal from these losses. Several of the women working in the lab, who were also worn-down, opted to transfer to other supervisors, significantly extending their time to degree completion, and, in one case, being forced to give up on a doctoral degree altogether. Those of us who remained were met with thinly veiled threats of retaliation from our supervisor who proudly exclaimed that he "can really hold a grudge." I note the gender of my former colleagues because I observed women being disproportionately bullied, harassed, ridiculed, gaslit, and criticized compared to men in the lab. Witnessing this misconduct continue—even after several complaints to the campus's ombudsperson had been made—I felt voiceless, isolated; trapped.

By 2021, my emotional and physical health had degraded so much in this toxic work environment that I seriously contemplated committing suicide—fearing that there was no way to continue working like this, but no way to escape without a career-ending black mark from my scorned supervisor. It was not until I participated in group therapy and heard from other graduate workers about their similar experiences, that I was empowered to leave my former lab. In doing so, I lost access and ownership to more than three years of collected data. Additionally, with no other assistantships available in my department, I now spend 20 hours per week as a graduate administrative assistant—working on tasks that have nothing to do with my research. What should have been a five-year degree will take no less than six. Still, I am grateful. This is a small price to pay for my life.

Members of the legislature, the University System of Maryland's belief that graduate workers do not need collective bargaining rights is not only mistaken. It is dangerous. What does it say about the current state of affairs when I must bring a workplace complaint all the way to Annapolis in order to be heard? This is not a one-off grievance between a mentor and mentee, nor is it a single hiccup in an otherwise well-functioning system. In the last three years, graduate assistants and their allies have submitted more than 300 articles of written testimony describing a range of abuses. Collective bargaining rights will not rid our workplaces of bad supervisors. But these basic democratic rights will give strength to many of the most vulnerable and exploited workers in our state.

Your vote in favor of passing SB0247 speaks truth to power: All Maryland workers deserve dignity, sanity, and to have their voices heard.

Sincerely,

Jan-Michael James Archer, Graduate Administrative Assistant
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SB 247 AAUP Testimony - Jared Ball.pdf

Uploaded by: Jared Ball

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By [Jared Ball, Dr.]
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Greetings to those gathered. My name is Jared Ball and I am currently a tenured full professor at Morgan State University where we routinely continue to play traditional roles serving students and communities whose experiences as students are themselves non-traditional. The routinization of those “non-traditional” conditions is perhaps a topic for another day, however, it remains that we are duty bound to serve communities often abandoned by society. And yet, many of us faculty feel abandoned by a working relationship with our institution that is not commensurate with what should be by now the basics of 21st century labor relations and which makes the highest levels of job performance impossible.

With more than 20 years teaching at Maryland universities, 17 of which have been at Morgan State, I have seen first-hand the damage caused by the absence of collective bargaining rights. Junior faculty are overrun by course loads, low pay, and few to no benefits while senior faculty are unable to properly negotiate defense or improvement of their own conditions much less those of their less protected colleagues. And while it is certainly true that HBCUs like Morgan suffer gross imbalances in resources compared to their PWI counterparts the absence of genuine representation or bargaining power continues to assure massive discrepancies in distribution of what resources exist.

In my time alone, I have suffered personally or witnessed first-hand having watched my own work plagiarized and submitted for funding, an erasure of any observable criteria for advancement or compensation, Deans with Bachelor degrees running schools where in-field Ph.Ds. are removed for their having any desire for academic freedom, salaries of favored faculty bumped while the rest are told forever to wait for new studies to conclude women and senior faculty are under-paid, faculty openly referred to as “terrorists” for having been born outside the U.S., direct threats of abuse of power by administration, and an endless list of passive aggressive hostilities. Yet, despite all the complaints, meetings, statements, and efforts to address these and so many other concerns, faculty are forced into silence, encouraged to seek employment elsewhere, or are targeted and told directly that, “if I cannot fire you I will make you quit” as was said to me and several others by Dwayne Wickham, a now retired Dean of the School of Communications.

Teaching, learning, and research all are best served by faculty who are themselves supported, confident in their place, properly compensated, and who have the ability to collectively bargain to assure optimum experience for all involved. The quality of research diminishes when faculty are over-worked and under-paid and have no voice to raise and no ability to make themselves heard. The quality of student experience is only enhanced when engaged by faculty who are not exhausted by their third or fourth class of the day, having to come from meetings where they are only threatened into doing more for fear of losing their job, or who have the ability to conduct research and teach in stress-free environments. No labor force should be without an ability to collectively bargain and no one interested in the best results of that labor should stand in the way of this fundamental point.

I am, therefore, in favor of HB 275 and the support for this long-held human right to collectively bargain.

jennifer.keohane.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Keohane

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Jennifer Keohane, Ph.D.**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Jennifer Keohane, and I am an assistant professor at the University of Baltimore, where I have worked for six years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

In my role at the University of Baltimore, I teach three classes every semester, and I'm directly responsible for 60-80 students. In addition to teaching my own classes, I direct our program in Oral Communication. This requires me to interface with the General Education Committee, as the Oral Communication courses are Graduation Requirements. In addition to working on learning outcomes and assessment, I staff the oral communication classes by hiring adjuncts to teach at our campus in Baltimore, in our Second Chance Program in Jessup Correctional Institute, and in our Dual Enrollment courses. Finding new adjuncts is a task made exceptionally difficult by the low rate of pay for part-time faculty. In addition to interviewing and hiring new faculty, I also conduct teaching observations to ensure quality courses are being delivered for our students. I serve in many additional roles on campus, such as chairing our undergraduate curriculum committee. Moreover, I pursue an active research program that results in peer-reviewed publications and conference presentations.

I strongly support the passage of SB247 for three reasons.

1. Collective bargaining is a key part of the democratic process in the workplace. Moreover, the fact that other state employees can collectively bargain, while higher ed faculty and graduate students have been excluded is undemocratic on face.
2. Collective bargaining streamlines and strengthens relations between administrators and faculty and graduate students. It ensures an efficient process for pursuing accountability when needed. When I was a graduate student in Wisconsin, a state that then allowed collective bargaining, union officials for our graduate student union (including me) met monthly with administrators to enforce our collective bargaining agreement, meetings that were quick, friendly, and had very real impacts on the quality of life of graduate students. We were able to work with our administrators to track down lost paychecks,

ensure healthy and safe environments for graduate student employees, and pursue pay equity among departments.

3. Collective bargaining can improve the working conditions of our lecturers and part-time faculty. As it is, I struggle to hire part-time faculty to staff our oral communication courses because of the low pay and lack of institutional support. Not only that, I want our valuable part-time faculty to feel comfortable speaking their minds, teaching controversial subjects, and pursuing excellence in their roles. Since they teach so many credit hours, it is important to emphasize that their working conditions are our students' learning conditions. If they had a collective bargaining agreement that facilitated improved working conditions, our departments and university classrooms would reap the benefits.

To conclude, I strongly urge a favorable report to SB247. This state and many others have for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as an integral way to foster democracy in the workplace and at institutions of higher learning. Collective bargaining is a fundamental human right that safeguards the employee voice in places of work. Many other public, higher education institutions across the country protect this right for their employees, as do many prestigious, private institutions in our state. I must emphasize that our working conditions are our students' learning conditions. Given that we want Maryland to be a vibrant, educated state ready to meet the demands of the future, I again call for a favorable report to SB247.

jesse.lee.brooks.pdf

Uploaded by: Jesse Lee Brooks

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Jesse Lee Brooks

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Jesse Brooks, and I am a lecturer at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for seven years teaching fiction, a course on writing about the environment, and a variety of others. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. This right should also be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach four courses each semester, with about twenty students in each class. This is twice as many courses than most tenured faculty. And many, sometimes the majority of the courses I teach are outside of my field of expertise. This of course increases the amount of work required to make a syllabus, lesson plan, and grade in an analytical manner. With a course load double that of the average tenured professor, this of course compounds with the extra work required to teach these classes. The best opportunity to achieve a tenured post is to publish, but this is exceedingly difficult to multitask alongside the semester's excessive work. I also teach during the summer break to afford my rent.

I live in a rent-controlled community and still have difficulty paying my rent each month, so it is not possible for me to cut back on my course load to help me advance in my teaching career by focusing more on publishing. Currently, I cannot contribute to retirement; and I will never be able to afford a home. I was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder four years ago, so I also need to maintain an adequate number of courses to secure my healthcare and to afford aspects that are not covered by my insurance, like my therapist who just changed to out-of-network. Each semester I struggle to handle the workload placed upon me in the time restraints enforced by many of the program directors. Their highest priority is to assess the students as quickly as possible, which can be difficult when you are trying to provide thorough feedback for eighty ten-page essays. The anxiety I have over possibly losing my job for failing to meet these restraints often exacerbates symptoms like depression. Being provided a more livable wage

alongside greater job security would help to not just provided long-term security, but my day-to-day security as well.

Again, I'm calling for a favorable report to SB 247. Members of the committee, collective bargaining is a fundamental human right that is granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path does not make sense, and I ask that you please consider making this change. I can assure you that my situation is not dissimilar from many of my collogues. I hear these stories from other co-workers every day. We did not choose these careers based on money, but to mentor and educate the public, and we cannot do our jobs adequately if much of our focus is on literally surviving. We end up failing our students and therefore ourselves for being unable to achieve our purpose in life, and we are currently powerless to end this vicious cycle.

All the best,

Jesse Lee Brooks

Burstrem written testimony SB247 favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Jessica Burstrem

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Jessica Burstrem, Graduate Assistant, UMBC
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Jessica Burstrem, and I am a Graduate Assistant (GA) at UMBC, where I have worked for over 2 years. I am also a 42-year-old disabled woman, a married mother of two, and a multiple domestic abuse and sexual assault survivor. I have been a Maryland resident and taxpayer since early 2014.

I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I also write to you today as a member of the UMBC Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee (GAAC), representing all GAs and their interests and concerns here. I have first-hand experience with the current “Meet and Confer” process and have seen that it does not work to solve graduate workers’ problems. Right now, if the university administration wants to prioritize other needs or ignore our concerns, they can, and they do. Right now, we have no recourse outside of certain individual faculty and staff at this university if we have a grievance. That is not a situation that promotes real accountability and power-sharing. We need the chance to try to make a better situation for ourselves, should we ever need it. That power alone – to unionize if we ever need to – may be a game-changer in terms of achieving the best possible outcomes for UMBC GAs, present and future, and for our fellow GAs throughout Maryland.

Zane Poffenberger, the Legislative Concerns Chair for UMBC’s Graduate Student Association, will be appearing in person to speak on our behalf tomorrow. He and the all-women GAAC have collaborated closely on his testimony. I urge you to hear in his voice the more than 750 UMBC GAs whom we represent.

Here, I will tell you a bit of my personal story. As a GA, I have been given various assignments based primarily on the work and research experience I had before I became a student at UMBC in 2020. As important as all my GA work is and has been to the students, faculty, and reputation of UMBC, as well as to me personally, none of it has been directly relevant to my own dissertation work on the 50-year Native American movement to change the name of the Washington football team.

Before coming to UMBC in 2020, I was a teacher or teaching assistant working directly with classroom students since 2004; for ten of those years, I was the teacher of record for college

writing classes. I taught thousands of students in my previous professional career. I have also worked in editing in various capacities from 2000-2015. Make no mistake: I am doing the equivalent of high-level professional consulting work in exchange for the opportunity to earn a PhD here.

My work at UMBC has drawn on my *twenty years of prior work experience* to enhance the professional work of the faculty here. One semester, I prepared and supplied the writing and research teaching strategies and resources I honed during my ten years teaching college writing courses to one of the departments at UMBC to freely use in their own teaching going forward. I spent two years supporting multiple faculty in that department inside and outside of their own classrooms, including teaching, assignment design, student feedback, and grading. I also edited transcripts of online classes during the first year of the pandemic, and I was the primary voice for the department in their public-facing social media accounts for two years.

For the past year, I have been working as a Book Reviews Editor and Editorial Assistant for the journal *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, where the Dean of my college is co-editor – the first time Black women have ever been at the helm of this journal. I work directly with faculty and graduate students as I seek to extend the opportunity for publication in this prestigious journal – and for review of their books – to the kinds of scholars not frequently historically included in *CSMC*, such as scholars from Africa, Asia, and Latin America; students and early career scholars; Black women and women of Color; LGBTQIA+ scholars; practitioners; faculty at teaching-centered schools; etc. It is paradigm-shifting and rewarding work, and I feel proud and honored to be able to do it. But it is work, and it does not help me finish my dissertation. It just helps me fund it.

The only reason I can afford to finally earn a PhD to properly represent the level of work I am capable of and have, in fact, been performing for decades is because, in 2018, I married a man who works for the Federal government. Even then, I took a pay cut to go back to school – a difficult decision in a family of four in which one of our children is himself a community college student as well. However, we also had little choice. My masters degree and decades of work experience have proven insufficient to enable me to secure a job offering a reliable living wage and benefits including retirement funding. Our household income is in the lowest 25% for our residential area. I need this degree for my own future and for my family.

Of course, I needed it before I was married too, when my now-adult son and I were living just over the poverty line, but I couldn't have afforded to get it then.

GAs in a union make more, on average, than those who cannot unionize, while GAs in Maryland on average make well below a living wage, especially if they have dependent children. It is essential to my personal ideals – which, I believe, are also the ideals of UMBC and of most educators and education advocates – that higher education be equitably accessible to all who want or need it, and right now, here, it isn't, and you can do something about that by passing this bill into law this year.

I request a favorable report to SB 247. Thank you for your attention.

Joan Bevelaqua Testimony SB 0247 Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Joan Bevelaqua

Position: FAV

February 16, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 0247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Support

Chairwoman Griffith and Senate Finance Committee Members,

As a University Adjunct Professor for over 20 years, I would like to introduce myself and my colleagues. For those of you unaware, we are the only ones left. We are the only state employees who cannot collectively bargain with our administration for better working conditions such as job security and compensation. We want the right to sit down at the bargaining table and speak for ourselves, to advocate for our students.

With the hard work of over 10 years, community college faculty in Maryland, finally won the right to collectively bargain because of the courage and will of those on this committee. How can the professors at the Maryland's universities be left behind?

We are not asking for handouts or special treatment. This legislation simply gives the faculty and grad students the right to decide for themselves if they want to form a union – not mandate it.

We are the same academic professionals whether at our community colleges or public universities. I, like thousands of other adjunct professors, teach both at our universities and our community colleges but as of now we have disparate faculty experiences. As a community college professor I have the right to collectively bargain but as a University of Maryland Global Campus professor I do not have this right. Where is the fairness in this? The time for change is now. As our governor Wes Moore has said, no one left gets left behind.

I strongly urge you to vote yes on SB 0247 and call on the members to provide a favorable committee report.

Joan Bevelaqua
Adjunct Professor
University of Maryland Global Campus

john.keniston.pdf

Uploaded by: John Keniston

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By John Keniston, Senior Faculty Specialist
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is John Keniston and I am a Senior Faculty Specialist in the Department of Geographical Sciences at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a Faculty Specialist in the Dept. of Geographical Sciences I work as a geospatial programmer and developer, primarily supporting the activities of the NASA Harvest consortium, a unique consortium hosted by the Dept. of Geographical Sciences, whose mission is to enable and advance adoption of satellite Earth observations by public and private organizations to benefit food security, agriculture, and human and environmental resiliency in the US and worldwide. NASA Harvest and many other special research projects in this department and across the university are supported by employees like me who are performing research, creating operational software, or performing other essential activities beyond traditional teaching.

In this role, I am part of a unique group of employees within my department and across the University. This group is made up of full-time non-teaching professional-track (PTK) faculty who perform a wide variety of duties which are essential to the functioning of each department. Yet, despite our important role, our opportunities for promotion and our standing in both department and University-wide governance is limited. It is my belief that this bill, and the ability for me and my peers to collectively bargain, would help address these concerns by providing clearer lines of communication between faculty and the administration while also strengthening the voice of PTK faculty in shared governance.

Most importantly, collective bargaining is an essential democratic right in a just society. Every worker in this state should have the right to collectively bargain and university employees should not be treated any differently. Therefore as a faculty member at the University of Maryland and a lifelong Marylander I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

john.macintosh.pdf

Uploaded by: John Macintosh

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Dr. John Macintosh, Lecturer**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Dr. John Macintosh and I am a lecturer (or adjunct professor) in the English Department at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked since 2019. Prior to this appointment, I was a graduate student at UMCP and an instructor of record (meaning I ran my own classes from course design to teaching to assessing students) on the same campus beginning in 2012. I'm here to call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee in addition to the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our four year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I generally teach three courses per semester, which is considered 75% of full time equivalent for professional track faculty. When offered to me, I also teach a business writing course in the summer to supplement my contract. This brings my teaching workload to six or seven courses each year. As a lecturer, I generally teach academic writing, which is a foundational course required of students in all majors. In academia, this is what is sometimes referred to as a "service course," meaning that its subject is not related directly to my research—instead, it helps students hone the skills they need to succeed on writing assignments in other classes. It's not a dream teaching assignment for most professors, but I enjoy watching my students progress as critical thinkers and persuasive writers. I also teach a wide range of lower and upper division literature courses when possible, as well as the introduction to the English major.

I support this bill because the conditions of my work require that I do. Academic Writing courses are capped at 19 students, which may not seem like a lot at first, but these courses are extremely labor intensive given the amount of writing students are expected to complete and the extensive feedback I am required (and wish) to give on these assignments. The nature of writing instruction necessitates individualized feedback; in semester, when I teach three academic writing courses, I give this feedback on six major assignments for nineteen students in three classes for a total of 342. That's not counting lesson planning or assessing shorter activities. My literature courses are capped at 30 students. Although I am not considered "full time" teaching three courses a semester (and sometimes a summer class) on the professional track, I teach either 1.5 (or 1.75) times the number of classes that tenure track faculty generally teach. For this, I am compensated less. In fact, I have worked part-time in the hospitality industry throughout my graduate and lecturer career to make ends meet. In addition to issues with workload and compensation, being on the professional track means that I work on a yearly

contract, which is not guaranteed, and I get paid by the course, the number of which are not guaranteed. Across my campus, these contracts vary by department. They are neither transparent, nor consistent. Instead, they are left to the whims of department chairs, enrollment expectations, and other factors. I have been fortunate with the leadership in my department, but my professional track colleagues and I shouldn't have to rely on the favor of another to maintain our jobs. Like in many other sectors of the labor market, it is hard to plan a life when you don't know if you'll have work in a couple of months or how much. I like my job. I enjoy teaching our students and watching them grow as thinkers and writers. But my colleagues and I would like to have a voice in our working conditions. Enacting this bill would allow people like me to have a say. Because they are on contract, many of them are afraid to speak out. I'm not, so I'm going to say it loud: collective bargaining would enable fair compensation, more stability, more dignity, more transparency, and more workplace democracy.

In my view, members of the committee, this is what it comes down to: collective bargaining between state employees and management promotes democracy in workplaces. Collective bargaining is a fundamental right granted to many public institutions of higher education nationwide, as well as private institutions in the state of Maryland. The right is also granted to other educators in the state. This is something that Marylanders already believe. Exempting four year public institutions from this right to have a say in their work isn't working.. Employees have a right to play a role in the conditions that govern our workplaces. I therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Davis--Written Testimony, SB 247.pdf

Uploaded by: Joshua Davis

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Joshua Davis

SB 247

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

February 14, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Joshua Davis and I'm an associate professor of history at the University of Baltimore, a state university for working adults and first-generation students of all ages that has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a predominantly Black institution. I've taught at UBalt for eight years.

I'm also a member of our university's chapter of the American Association of University Professors. Our AAUP chapter at UBalt recently voted strongly in favor of Senate Bill 247, as did AAUP chapters at Towson, College Park, Bowie, and Salisbury and state chapters of the American Federation of Teachers and AFL-CIO, the SEIU Local 500 DC-MD, the United Auto Workers, and the UMD Graduate Student Government.

I'm testifying to respectfully ask that this committee issue a favorable report to SB 247, because university faculty and graduate assistants, like all other state workers, deserve the right of collective bargaining.

To anyone having doubts about supporting this bill, I'd ask: K-12 teachers can do collective bargaining in this state, and so can non-faculty staff at state universities as well as community college faculty. So why are USM faculty denied the right of collective bargaining? How can anyone who claims to support workers and to support education in Maryland not trust our university faculty to responsibly exercise the right of collective bargaining?

In his recent State of the Union address, President Biden stressed our responsibility to revive the dignity of work in our country by protecting workers' right to unionize. This is what this bill would do, if passed. For those opposing this bill, I would ask, why aren't you willing to provide University System of Maryland faculty the dignity and respect that we deserve as state workers?

At the University of Baltimore, I'm proud to report that many of our undergraduates go on to pursue fulfilling careers in K-12 public education. We've had at least four alums of our History program become teachers in Baltimore City and Baltimore County public schools directly after graduation in the last five years.

One major reason I'm happy to encourage our students to pursue K-12 teaching is because our public school educators in Maryland belong to unions with collective bargaining rights. It's this feature of public school employment that makes teaching in Maryland much more appealing to college graduates than teaching in states like West Virginia, where teachers are prohibited from collective bargaining.

Sadly, the lack of collective bargaining for USM faculty is a chief reason why I'm less inclined to encourage our graduates to pursue faculty teaching jobs in our state university system. Unlike neighboring state university systems in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Washington, D.C., our USM faculty are barred from collective bargaining.

This strikes me as not only unfair, but also short sighted. Our state is losing out on talented graduate students and university faculty to neighboring states where the university systems allow collective bargaining. Faculty and graduate students want the protections of union membership, as a wave of recent unionization drives on college campuses such as Johns Hopkins University and Northwestern University illustrate.

I suspect that most of you support the right of our K-12 teachers to do collective bargaining, and that you also supported the Kirwin bill because you wanted to strengthen our state's public education system. If passed, SB 247 would have a similarly positive effect on public education in Maryland by improving our universities' ability to attract faculty who can boost our state's university system, in turn helping to keep it one of the best in the country.

In conclusion, I respectfully ask that your committee issue a favorable report to SB 247.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Joshua Davis
University of Baltimore

julie.greene.pdf

Uploaded by: Julie Greene

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Julie Greene, Professor of History
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Julie Greene and I am Professor of History at the University of Maryland at College Park, where I have worked for 15 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. Collective bargaining is a fundamental human right and should be extended to all university employees.

As a professor of history, I teach four courses a year. I was the co-founding director, along with the late Ira Berlin, of UMD's Center for Global Migration Studies. In both my teaching and the work I've done with the Center for Global Migration Studies, I advise and mentor a great many graduate and undergraduate students. I have served my department, my college, and my university in a number of ways--for example as Director of Graduate Studies for the History Department for three years, and as chair of the University's Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure Committee.

I support SB 247 first and foremost because collective bargaining is a fundamental human right, and therefore to deny that right is undemocratic. But I also believe that the university needs its faculty and graduate students to be fully functioning members of the community, and for that to happen, for full and equitable lines of communication, we need collective bargaining rights. Graduate students are exposed to a number of challenges. As DGS I had to personally intervene several times when graduate students were harassed or exploited by faculty members who were their mentors and/or employers. Collective bargaining rights would have been extremely helpful in this situation.

I believe UMD President Pines when he stresses the social justice mission of the University of Maryland. Social justice must start with collective bargaining rights for faculty and graduate students. I am inspired by Governor Moore's motto, "No One Left Behind," and I ask that we resolve to stop leaving behind UMD faculty and graduate students. UMD needs the full talents of all community members to achieve its potential, and that requires the right to collective bargaining.

In conclusion, I ask the committee to respect the democratic and human rights of every UMD

community member and report favorably on SB 247. By increasing equity, transparency, and communication, this fundamental right will provide a way for all employees to contribute powerfully to making UMD the best it can be.

karen.angeline.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Angeline

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Karen Angeline, Senior Lecturer
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Karen Angeline. I have been a Professional Track Faculty member at the U. of Maryland College Park for 14 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. I believe that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

My teaching workload

Over the past eight years, I have designed and taught a fully online course in business writing. I teach juniors from all majors—1,368 so far—to be strong workplace writers who then go out and positively represent the University of Maryland.

Every semester, I have 4 sections, totaling 76 students. We have 51 assignments, so I assess 2,360 submissions. Some are simple. My main work is that each of the 76 students create original semester-long writing projects. That adds up to 304 papers that require me to provide in-depth guidance on ideas, research, writing, and editing. We also have six graded peer edits, a cover letter/resume, and an e-portfolio. The course is rigorous for both the students and for me. Still, every semester, I get feedback from many students who say that the course was one of the most valuable they've taken at UMD because of the skills they will carry to their careers.

I also contribute to my department by designing faculty workshops, writing observations for promotion dossiers, serving on committees, and attending meetings.

Given all the good work that is reflected in both student feedback and enrollment numbers, one might think that I have salary parity and job security. Unfortunately, I have job security in name only; an easily manipulated contract shows that I may be valuable, but I'm still vulnerable.

Why I support this bill: existing paths to conflict resolution are unsuccessful

Fifteen months ago, the cohort of Professional Track Faculty who have taught online since 2015 faced a threat to our jobs because of a complaint from anonymous colleagues. After teaching for two semesters online during covid, these colleagues said that it was unfair for the online cohort to continue receiving our usual teaching assignments, because they now wanted to teach online too.

However, there is nothing unfair about the current system. When we started the program, the online cohort participated in University-sponsored training in online course development and delivery. Many of us created and continue to refine our courses on personal time and took graduate-level courses to build skills. Some of the courses we designed were used as templates by typically in-person faculty when everyone switched to online learning during covid, and contributed to their success and ease with online teaching.

The cohort was told that we must commit to teaching only online. So, many of us made significant life decisions based on that expected career path, like moving out-of-state to care for family members while teaching full-time. The department administration fully supported these life changes, partially because they saw them as offsets to the challenge of teaching online, which, at the time, no one wanted to do.

Despite prior approval and support from the department, we weren't defended in the face of these complaints. Instead, a 15-month long process of determining "equity in scheduling" (as labeled by the administration) began.

It was unclear whether the online cohort would continue to be given the online course assignments we earned the right to teach. In response, members of the cohort made a good faith effort to advocate, problem solve, and negotiate. We proposed potentially more "equitable" solutions that allowed us to keep our livelihoods. Administrators distributed surveys on the issue, but never shared the results. We attended meetings, wrote emails, sought advice on effective self-governance, and talked about strategy amongst ourselves.

In response, during a town hall meeting, administrators said our contracts didn't specify or guarantee a mode of course delivery. That meant that courses could be assigned per the contract terms, but administration was free to change, for example, past online assignments to in-person. So online courses (that had been created by the original online cohort) might be distributed to graduate students and other faculty at random. We were not reassured with a firm commitment to how seniority, course content authorship, or special training would factor into how online courses might be distributed.

To this day, administrators have not shown any recognition to the online cohort for our part in the success of the online program. A solution or decision is still pending 15 months later.

Secure, properly trained and supported teaching faculty do better work for students

During covid, when all courses went online, most students felt that their learning outcomes suffered because the quality of teaching went down. And yet, for years before and after covid, the Professional Writing Program online courses have had waitlists longer than the number of the available seats.

The quality provided by those of us who were specially trained and honed our craft turned something that most students hated into a sought-after course modality. And yet, because of the

fragmented, precarious nature of professional-track jobs, the same PTK faculty that provide significant value to the University feel powerless and unheard about the fate of their own work.

And students suffer the consequences. They pay to, and deserve to, receive online writing instruction from the most qualified and experienced faculty. Significant policy-based research shows that they lose out when faculty are seen as interchangeable and our expertise is discounted for the administration's convenience.

How your constituents pay for dysfunctional problem solving

My situation is just one example of the systemic issues caused by the caste system of PTK faculty vs tenured administrators. But similar stories are likely playing out across the University—the faculty that teach the courses that students are required to take, the foundational courses that teach the skills that students bring to their advanced classes taught by tenured professors, are often seen as disposable and interchangeable.

In a student's freshman year, they will likely see more professional-track than tenure-track faculty. When they take required, general-education courses in other majors than their own, they are likely being taught by professional-track faculty. We represent the University in the crucial times when students and their parents are determining whether or not college holds value for them.

Why you should support SB 247

Today, legislators like yourself are increasingly held accountable for the cost/benefit ratios of a college education. You're often asked to ensure that students and their tuition-paying parents are getting consistent value for their money.

The best way to achieve this is by allowing the main providers of that value the ability to advocate for ourselves. By voting in favor of collective bargaining, you can help assure that professional-track faculty will gain security, stability, and the ability to influence our careers and student outcomes for the positive. Afford us the same right that is given to other state employees and faculty: to come to the table as equals whose contributions to the University help keep the tuition payments coming in and the rankings high.

Every graduate of the University of Maryland who is a strong writer—and thanks to professional-track faculty, many are indeed—reflects our work. We are the ones teaching these required, vital, outward-facing courses, and we provide the most bang for your constituents' bucks. I again ask you to give a favorable report to SB 427 and give us a system to negotiate with the best interests of the many, rather than the select, privileged, and usually tenured few.

karen.angeline.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Angeline

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Karen Angeline, Senior Lecturer
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Karen Angeline. I have been a Professional Track Faculty member at the U. of Maryland College Park for 14 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. I believe that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

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Over the past eight years, I have designed and taught a fully online course in business writing. I teach juniors from all majors—1,368 so far—to be strong workplace writers who then go out and positively represent the University of Maryland.

Every semester, I have 4 sections, totaling 76 students. We have 51 assignments, so I assess 2,360 submissions. Some are simple. My main work is that each of the 76 students create original semester-long writing projects. That adds up to 304 papers that require me to provide in-depth guidance on ideas, research, writing, and editing. We also have six graded peer edits, a cover letter/resume, and an e-portfolio. The course is rigorous for both the students and for me. Still, every semester, I get feedback from many students who say that the course was one of the most valuable they've taken at UMD because of the skills they will carry to their careers.

I also contribute to my department by designing faculty workshops, writing observations for promotion dossiers, serving on committees, and attending meetings.

Given all the good work that is reflected in both student feedback and enrollment numbers, one might think that I have salary parity and job security. Unfortunately, I have job security in name only; an easily manipulated contract shows that I may be valuable, but I'm still vulnerable.

Why I support this bill: existing paths to conflict resolution are unsuccessful

Fifteen months ago, the cohort of Professional Track Faculty who have taught online since 2015 faced a threat to our jobs because of a complaint from anonymous colleagues. After teaching for two semesters online during covid, these colleagues said that it was unfair for the online cohort to continue receiving our usual teaching assignments, because they now wanted to teach online too.

However, there is nothing unfair about the current system. When we started the program, the online cohort participated in University-sponsored training in online course development and delivery. Many of us created and continue to refine our courses on personal time and took graduate-level courses to build skills. Some of the courses we designed were used as templates by typically in-person faculty when everyone switched to online learning during covid, and contributed to their success and ease with online teaching.

The cohort was told that we must commit to teaching only online. So, many of us made significant life decisions based on that expected career path, like moving out-of-state to care for family members while teaching full-time. The department administration fully supported these life changes, partially because they saw them as offsets to the challenge of teaching online, which, at the time, no one wanted to do.

Despite prior approval and support from the department, we weren't defended in the face of these complaints. Instead, a 15-month long process of determining "equity in scheduling" (as labeled by the administration) began.

It was unclear whether the online cohort would continue to be given the online course assignments we earned the right to teach. In response, members of the cohort made a good faith effort to advocate, problem solve, and negotiate. We proposed potentially more "equitable" solutions that allowed us to keep our livelihoods. Administrators distributed surveys on the issue, but never shared the results. We attended meetings, wrote emails, sought advice on effective self-governance, and talked about strategy amongst ourselves.

In response, during a town hall meeting, administrators said our contracts didn't specify or guarantee a mode of course delivery. That meant that courses could be assigned per the contract terms, but administration was free to change, for example, past online assignments to in-person. So online courses (that had been created by the original online cohort) might be distributed to graduate students and other faculty at random. We were not reassured with a firm commitment to how seniority, course content authorship, or special training would factor into how online courses might be distributed.

To this day, administrators have not shown any recognition to the online cohort for our part in the success of the online program. A solution or decision is still pending 15 months later.

Secure, properly trained and supported teaching faculty do better work for students

During covid, when all courses went online, most students felt that their learning outcomes suffered because the quality of teaching went down. And yet, for years before and after covid, the Professional Writing Program online courses have had waitlists longer than the number of the available seats.

The quality provided by those of us who were specially trained and honed our craft turned something that most students hated into a sought-after course modality. And yet, because of the

fragmented, precarious nature of professional-track jobs, the same PTK faculty that provide significant value to the University feel powerless and unheard about the fate of their own work.

And students suffer the consequences. They pay to, and deserve to, receive online writing instruction from the most qualified and experienced faculty. Significant policy-based research shows that they lose out when faculty are seen as interchangeable and our expertise is discounted for the administration's convenience.

How your constituents pay for dysfunctional problem solving

My situation is just one example of the systemic issues caused by the caste system of PTK faculty vs tenured administrators. But similar stories are likely playing out across the University—the faculty that teach the courses that students are required to take, the foundational courses that teach the skills that students bring to their advanced classes taught by tenured professors, are often seen as disposable and interchangeable.

In a student's freshman year, they will likely see more professional-track than tenure-track faculty. When they take required, general-education courses in other majors than their own, they are likely being taught by professional-track faculty. We represent the University in the crucial times when students and their parents are determining whether or not college holds value for them.

Why you should support SB 247

Today, legislators like yourself are increasingly held accountable for the cost/benefit ratios of a college education. You're often asked to ensure that students and their tuition-paying parents are getting consistent value for their money.

The best way to achieve this is by allowing the main providers of that value the ability to advocate for ourselves. By voting in favor of collective bargaining, you can help assure that professional-track faculty will gain security, stability, and the ability to influence our careers and student outcomes for the positive. Afford us the same right that is given to other state employees and faculty: to come to the table as equals whose contributions to the University help keep the tuition payments coming in and the rankings high.

Every graduate of the University of Maryland who is a strong writer—and thanks to professional-track faculty, many are indeed—reflects our work. We are the ones teaching these required, vital, outward-facing courses, and we provide the most bang for your constituents' bucks. I again ask you to give a favorable report to SB 427 and give us a system to negotiate with the best interests of the many, rather than the select, privileged, and usually tenured few.

Roseblatt_Testimony_Senate.pdf

Uploaded by: Karin Roseblatt

Position: FAV



A BETTER UNIVERSITY IS POSSIBLE

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**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Karin Alejandra Roseblatt, Professor of History
Vice President, UMD-CP Chapter, American Association of University Professors**

**SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. I am Karin Roseblatt, and I am a Professor of History at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 15 years. I serve also as Vice President of our College Park chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), and I am on the AAUP's National Council. I urge this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247.

As you know, the bill before you does not prescribe unionization and collective bargaining. It only allows for that possibility. Passage of this bill seems uncontroversial. After all, unlike legislatures elsewhere, the Maryland legislature is not anti-union. Unlike legislators in Florida or Indiana, Maryland legislators have not been trying to undermine institutions of higher education, curtail the free speech rights of faculty, or dictate what and how we teach.

Universities are under threat in many states, where State governments seek to limit the free inquiry that has made our universities the envy of the world. But institutions of higher education are also threatened by the longstanding defunding of higher education and by top-down management styles that erode shared governance. Maryland faculty, like their colleagues around the country, feel very deeply the fragility of our higher education institutions and our livelihoods. My colleagues and I feel acutely that we must have every tool available to us to be able to speak loudly, with a collective voice. Collective bargaining is an effective form of faculty voice, one which the AAUP has long viewed as compatible with—and indeed able to prop up—institutions of shared governance.

In my role as faculty member, I regularly teach and advise graduate and undergraduate students interested in the History of Latin America and the Caribbean. I also run a Center for Historical Studies in my Department. I headed our Latin American Studies Center for five years. And I am Principal Investigator for a five-year National Science Foundation Grant to promote and develop the History of Science, Technology, Environment, and Medicine in Latin America and the Caribbean. I do a lot of service to my

profession as well, conducting tenure, promotion and department reviews for other institutions; peer reviewing books and articles; serving on prize, nomination, and program committees for professional organizations and my university; mentoring graduate students from other institutions and early career scholars.

I find this work very satisfying, but since the ranks of tenured professors has dwindled, the workload for those of us remaining has become untenable. Tenured faculty do a lot of unremunerated work, but at least we are paid decently—if not well—by our employers. A crisis within academia is reaching a breaking point as the majority of our untenured faculty members (75% of all higher education instructors in Maryland's institutions of higher education) do not have the ability to take on this work. Their teaching is simply too taxing for them to do unpaid service work. The Universities that have produced so much cutting edge research and given so much luster to the United States and to the State of Maryland are imperiled.

As Vice President of our campus AAUP chapter, I have learned a great deal about the issues our faculty face on the College Park campus. Let me underscore the three issues that come up most frequently: the failures of shared governance; poor working conditions for non-tenure-line faculty; and working conditions for graduate students. Collective bargaining can provide a democratic means of addressing all three areas of concern.

Faculty Governance is not working. I have long observed that on my campus, committees in which faculty are meant to play key roles according to the Universities own guidelines are chock full of administrators. This was clearly the case with the University's Strategic Planning Committee. Its members had an average salary of over \$300,000. This year, a hiring committee for a Dean of the Graduate School had two students and two faculty members among its sixteen members. And a Budget Subcommittee of the University Senate, which was meant to increase transparency and accountability is dormant because it has not been given the information it needs to function. Almost all University committees are like this, even ones dealing with curriculum. This contravenes the letter and spirit of shared governance.

More troubling still is the proliferation of programs staffed by non-tenure track faculty. In these programs, administrators make all the curricular decisions—again in contravention of the principles of shared governance. Moreover, faculty who are worried about whether their contract will be renewed or not are loath to raise their voices. The non-tenure-track faculty who are closest to our students—and who teach 70% of the credit hours on our campus—are effectively muzzled. This situation pleases administrators who think they know best and often follow the latest fad (often based on shoddy research). But it is not good for our students. Those who teach our students, who are closest to our students, need a firm voice in curricular policies and policies regarding research.

Working conditions for non-tenure-track faculty are abysmal. To say that non-tenure-track faculty on our campus are upset would be a gross understatement. They are fearful and resentful. They work very hard for our students but feel unappreciated. They cannot teach or give opinions freely because they fear that their contracts will not be renewed. Many declined to write testimony for this hearing because they feel vulnerable to reprisal. The most common complaint we hear at College Park is not about low salaries, but about job insecurity. It is one thing to face unemployment if you are in a field where there is job mobility and/or decent wages. But academic jobs are scarce, people have family responsibilities that limit mobility, and low pay means that there is no buffer to cushion unemployment.

I know of one colleague, who has worked at the institution for over twenty years and had her salary cut in half simply because the Chair of her Department felt she was too abrasive. A group of instructors in an Honors College received their contract days before the start of classes to find that their teaching load had

been increased. These types of stories are common because policies do not provide security or stability, and there is no enforcement of existing policies. The result is a majority of faculty cowed and beaten down. Despite the admirable job these faculty do teaching our students, students cannot learn to be innovative, entrepreneurial, and creative when their instructors are just trying to keep their heads down.

Graduate Assistants are overworked and underpaid. You will hear University administrators say that unionization will ruin the relationship between advisors and mentees. But they have never asked faculty our opinion! Most faculty I know feel that the low stipends and poor work conditions endured by graduate students is one of the main issues our University faces, and that it undermines the standing of our institution.

Because I have supervised more than 10 PhD and MA students and sat on the committees of dozens more, I can speak from personal experience. I have personally supervised graduate assistants who worked as bartenders on the weekends. One of my advisees taught a course at Prince George's Community College to make ends meet. I routinely sign papers that allow my students to take on work above and beyond the twenty hours a week that graduate assistants are normally permitted to work. I do so reluctantly, because this is time that they should be devoting to their studies. But I sign nevertheless because the students cannot survive without a supplement to their income. I note that this no doubt makes it more difficult for graduate assistants to complete their degrees in a timely manner, and this is an important metric against which our university is measured. It is exceedingly difficult to recruit top graduate students when stipends are low.

The international graduate students who powerfully contribute to the prestige and finances of our campus are particularly vulnerable. They are by law prohibited from working outside the universities where they study. They have additional travel costs. And many come to the United States with their families. US immigration legislation prohibits the spouses of these students from working. Can you imagine trying to support a spouse—or a spouse and child—with \$25,000 while paying for books and other research expenses? I personally know a student in that situation. He is, unsurprisingly, food insecure.

Many graduate assistants are asked to work more than the required twenty hours a week. I have seen this more than once in my own department. During the current COVID19 crisis, one of my own advisees had to in essence take over a course when the instructor of record disappeared. He had minimal support, and he was not teaching in his area of expertise. This kind of experience obviously slows a student's progress toward their degree. Many departments are not good at informing graduate assistants about their rights and obligations. Nor are many faculty members aware of what is appropriate. A graduate assistant union would help clarify and publicize rights and obligations of graduate assistants.

The Bottom Line. You may be asking how much unionization might cost the State and its Universities. Keep in mind that only 28.7% of the UMD budget goes toward instruction and that every year the University takes in about \$130 million more than it spends. Current administration has chosen to increase the number of administrators 42% from 2015 to 2019 and an additional 8.4% from 2020 to 2022. The largest increases in spending are in the institutional expenses category, which includes the salaries of upper administration. The second largest increases are in the category that includes Deans and Associate Deans. Budgets are about choices. University administrators have made their choices. Now let faculty and graduate students make theirs.

karyn.pomerantz.pdf

Uploaded by: Karyn Pomerantz

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Karyn Pomerantz, MLS, MPH**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Karyn Pomerantz and I am an alumna of the University of Maryland, classes 1971 and 1986, and retired public health educator and librarian at the George Washington University where I have worked for 30 years. I currently live in College Park, Maryland and attend many UMD events. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As an educator and student advisor at GWU, I am familiar with the pressures on faculty and staff to serve the needs of our students. Our department required faculty to publish 40 articles to achieve a promotion. High numbers of students needing advice overwhelmed faculty, and our teaching assistants suffered overloads of courses and research tasks.

As a student at UMCP, I rarely had difficulty in meeting with faculty. My classes were never taught by other students. I have many friends now who are teaching 4 courses a semester as adjuncts or full-time teaching faculty while scrambling for grants. While 4 classes do not appear to be excessive when compared to high school teaching loads, they involve scores of hours to develop and many more to evaluate assignments that tend to require individual consultations. On top of this, university faculty also spend hours applying for funding, performing community service, and serving on university committees.

Several years ago, UMD facility workers were demanding respect and increased income. Housekeepers were only earning \$10 per hour while being subject to impoverished, overworked conditions, and sexual harassment. Without the right to unionize and bargain, these toxic conditions will persist for all employees. They will result in burn-out, resignations, and a lower quality of education for our students.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of

ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

kate.drabinski.pdf

Uploaded by: Kate Drabinski

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Kate Drabinski, Principal Lecturer, UMBC Gender, Women's, + Sexuality Studies
SB 247
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.

katherine.wasdin.pdf

Uploaded by: Katherine Wasdin

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**
**By Katherine Wasdin, Associate Professor of Classics, University of Maryland, College
Park**
SB 247
**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants**
February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Katherine Wasdin and I am an associate professor of Classics at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 3 and a half years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

At UMD, I conduct research and teach both large (c. 35-180 person) undergraduate courses in topics such as Greek Mythology and smaller (c. 5-12 person) advanced courses in Latin literature. As part of my larger classes, I work alongside graduate teaching assistants in my program. One of the reasons I support this bill is that I feel that my assistants are employees and should have a right to collective bargaining. Far from creating a barrier between us, I believe that graduate student representation would clarify our relationship and allow my assistants to fully appreciate their role as co-workers. They are also laughably underpaid, especially given the high cost of living in the greater DC area. This can lead to living conditions which undercut their purpose for being at UMD. During the pandemic, for example, two of our students lived together in cheap and unsafe housing and had a difficult time breaking their lease to find an affordable and appropriate place to live. This took away from their abilities to perform their tasks as TAs and students. Graduate student workers deserve to be paid enough to focus on their studies and TA-ships in a supportive environment.

I also strongly support this bill because it could provide collective bargaining for faculty, both tenured and non-tenured. My colleagues and I are not paid enough to account for the relatively high cost of living. When we hired a new colleague in our department, the most challenging part of the interviews was when candidates asked about housing options in the area. We struggled to honestly describe the options available based on the salary we offer, and were worried about losing candidates to schools who could pay more. This is especially true for my colleagues who are not on the tenure-line and receive even lower salaries, even though they teach much higher course-loads. While my department would like to pay our PTK (Professional track/non-tenured) members more, we are constricted by the budget amounts given to us by the college/University. Collective bargaining rights would allow their salary to reflect the high levels of teaching and student support that they perform. Finally, collective bargaining would also increase the shared

governance at UMD. Currently, this is performed through the University Senate, which can provide some space for discussion, but which serves primarily as a rubber-stamp or advisory body, in my experience, without full powers to set the university's agenda or respond to issues such as overspending on sports or administrative salaries.

I therefore urge the members of the committee to support SB 247. Collective bargaining rights already protect community college employees and workers, both faculty and graduate students, at many of our peer institutions in the Big Ten. These institutions are arguably stronger for this, and workers in the University System of Maryland should have the same protections.

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Uploaded by: Keegan Clements-Houser

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Keegan Clements-Housser, Graduate Student Instructor of Record
SB 247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am a graduate student instructor of record. I describe myself that way instead of using the more traditional nomenclature of "graduate teaching assistant" because I am not an assistant. I am not supporting a professor, or co-teaching with other graduate students, or leading the discussion or lab segment of a larger course; I do not assist anyone. Instead, I am teaching a class on my own. My name, and my name only, appears in the course catalog next to my course sections. I am responsible for writing my own syllabi, developing my own lesson plans, grading all coursework, dealing with instances of student plagiarism and academic dishonesty, helping to connect students in mental or physical crises with the right resources, etc. In essence, I am responsible for all of the same things any other instructor of record would be. In this capacity, the duties I perform are indistinguishable from those of an adjunct instructor or assistant professor.

I teach this class in addition to pursuing my own research work. In my case, having recently advanced to the status of PhD candidate by successfully defending my comprehensive exams?an arduous, intensive, months-long process that, notably, I had to complete while also continuing to teach?this means preparing my dissertation prospectus, coordinating with scholars at other institutions, submitting original to academic conferences and journals, navigating funding needs and IRB approval, and all the myriad other responsibilities inherent to the daily life of an aspiring scholar. Combined with my teaching responsibilities, my day-to-day academic life is not dissimilar to that of an entry-level assistant professor.

Unlike that assistant professor, however, I am not an employee. I am not working toward tenure. I don't have any sort of employment contract. I don't receive formal sick days (a serious issue, since I have multiple chronic health conditions to manage), or mandated work breaks, or PTO. I receive no benefits, although I am at least permitted to pay to participate in a version of the employee health plan. If I were to lose my position for any reason, I would almost certainly not be eligible for unemployment insurance, since I am not actually an employee... although the fact that I receive W-2s might be enough to disqualify me from other welfare programs. I lack many of the legal protections afforded to state employees because, once again, despite teaching a class and conducting research on behalf of the University of Maryland, I am not an employee. I have no clear relationship with HR, and information on who I should bring concerns to is often murky at best. Although I have been fortunate enough to have established a very supportive and reliable dissertation committee, including a truly exemplary advisor, I would have very limited recourse if I was suddenly less fortunate. While I understand that there is a "meet-and-confer" system in place, I had never even heard of it before researching this legislative package, and I had certainly never been approached to participate in the process. Clearly, then, the existing system is inadequate in at least that

regard.

Also, unlike an assistant professor, my non-employment stipend equates to poverty wages. Even after seeking out very low-quality housing in an old building with absent, negligent property managers, I still see almost the entirety of my stipend go toward my rent, necessitating that I take out student loans, despite being here on a "funded" program. Stipend increases, when they do happen, do not sufficiently keep pace with cost of living increases. The most recent stipend increase, for example, worked out to about a 1.5% increase overall, which failed to match even inflation, let alone other external factors. In essence, despite taking on more and more responsibilities each year, I effectively make less now than I did when I first started.

Finally, and perhaps most crucially, unlike an assistant professor, I am barred from collective bargaining. Outside of hoping that an administrator who I have no way of holding to account opts to work in my best interest, I have no recourse. Neither do any of my fellow graduate students, including those in situations far more dire than mine. Despite being an essential part of the university workforce, we have no real agency. We are powerless. This must change.

And it will change, one way or another. My first advanced degree came from a different R1 state university, where all graduate students workers were classified as employees and were unionized. It took those students a general university system strike to win those rights, causing significant disruption to university operations across the state in the process, but win them they did. As someone with a lot of grading and research to do, though, I would really rather we skip the "major disruptions to public universities across the state" stage that other university systems are currently or have recently experienced. Instead, I would much prefer that change come here, in the form of these bills.

If not, though? Well, as the labor saying goes, one day more. I have seen a better system in action, and I will work tirelessly toward seeing that reality reach Maryland as well. I know I am far from alone in that regard.

Sincerely,
Keegan Clements-Housser
Graduate Student Instructor of Record
Philip Merrill College of Journalism
University of Maryland, College Park
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keeganc@umd.edu

kim.coles.pdf

Uploaded by: Kim Coles

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to
the Maryland Senate Finance
Committee**

**By Kimberly Anne Coles, Professor of English, The University of
Maryland SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and
Graduate Assistants
February 16,**

2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Kim Coles and I am a full Professor at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for 18 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach two courses per semester with 25-30 students in each class. I teach one lecture course each year with 50-75. Which is to say, that I teach roughly 100-150 student per academic year. I supervise students pursuing Masters degrees in English and currently have three PhD students under my supervision. In addition, I assist with all of the administrative work of my department and university, as we all do: while not trained in administration, academics are nonetheless tasked with the running of the institution at all levels. I am a university senator, have served on the Senate Executive committee, the university Athletic Council, and numerous fellowship committees. I have, with my colleagues, helped steer the university through some of its most fraught and painful transitions, including navigating its course through the crises of the murder of Lt. Richard Collins III and the death of Jordan McNair.

None of this is easy work. But it is work in which every member of the university faculty—both tenure and professional track—and its graduate student body participates. Our efforts assure that the University of Maryland maintains its position as both an institution of higher learning and one of high moral standing. In the latter task, much work still needs to be done, and collective bargaining is a key piece in its pursuit. It largely falls to the faculty and student body to assure that the institution(s) at which we work are accessible, inclusive, diverse and humane. It largely falls to the faculty and student body to assure that the labor of each member of the communities in which we work is recognized and properly compensated. And it largely falls to the faculty and student body to assure that the administration is held accountable for the inevitable shortfalls and oversights that attend the running of a large

institution. We are, in fact, the collective body that assures that the University of Maryland earns its status as a flagship institution.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of

ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Anne Coles
Professor of English
University of Maryland

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Uploaded by: L Suzanne Gordon

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Dr. L. Suzanne Gordon

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is L. Suzanne Gordon and I am a non-Tenured/non-Tenure-Track (non-T/TT) Lecturer at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for more than a decade (and where I worked as a Graduate Teaching Assistant for a decade previously). I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland. As a non-tenured, non-tenure-track faculty member, although I have worked in this role at UMD for more than a decade, I have no job security at all. Instead—like all the rest of the rest of the non-tenured and non-tenure-track faculty at UMD, which comprise 75% of its faculty—I am an “at-will” employee, as I have been at other Maryland colleges and universities where I have taught, along with teaching at UMD. This means that, however highly I am rated by my students, I can be let go at the will of the employing institution, e.g., if not enough students sign up for my classes, or for any reason at all.

Further, we non-T/TT faculty make substantially less salary than T/TT faculty. As a result, at age 76, I cannot afford to retire on my savings and teacher’s pension, though I have made full-time-work contributions to the plan for many years. So I continue to work, teaching a half-time load. At UMD, we have a food bank for students. We need one for non-T/TT faculty including Graduate Assistants as well. Enacting SB 247 would give me and other non-T/TT faculty and staff collective bargaining rights, much needed, given the inequities in employment status and salary between T/TT faculty and the rest of us at-will employees.

Members of the Committee, for decades this state has viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as an important democratic and fundamental human right in state workplaces, including public education institutions. It has long been viewed as the best way to ensure that employee voices play a vital role in the establishment of workplace conditions. In fact, it is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and to many prestigious, private institutions in our state. The reasons given for exempting 4-year public institutions from the right to bargain no longer make sense. Therefore, I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

lasair.m.ni.chochlain.pdf

Uploaded by: Lasair M Ni Chochlain

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Lasair M Ni Chochlain, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am a disabled student who in the last year has involved myself in disability advocacy at the University of Maryland, and I can tell you that graduate students NEED collective bargaining rights to secure fair and reasonable disability support. Right now, what is offered by the Accessibility and Disability Services as the university isn't even on par with other Big 10 institutions. The university needs to allocate more funds for disability services and support to make them available at low or no cost for graduate students, and efforts to make them do that have failed without CBR. Not only that, but COVID response is a huge disability justice issue. The University of Maryland has failed to continue the N95 mask mandate that was extremely popular with graduate assistants, especially teaching assistants who have to come in contact with large numbers of undergrad students every week. Many graduate assistants (and faculty and staff) either have health conditions that put them at greater risk or live/work closely with someone who does. Collective bargaining rights would help us ensure that UMD continues to provide free tests and masks throughout the pandemic, and ensure that those suffering from Long Covid have the resources and support they need to stay at their roles and continue to make progress.

Sincerely,
Lasair M Ni Chochlain
Graduate Assistant
Entomology
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
8608 34th ave, College Park, MD 20740
lasair@umd.edu

laura.demarco.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura DeMarco

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Laura DeMarco, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I live in an area with an extremely high cost of living, and my wages as a graduate assistant are not keeping up. Despite having one of the better-paid positions on campus (by a mile), I often have to skip meals at work because I cannot afford to pay for lunches. I also find myself petrified of my living situation. I can barely afford to live where I do, but moving back with my parents would jeopardize my education. I can't afford to stay, but I have nowhere to go.

Sincerely,
Laura DeMarco
Graduate Assistant
Libraries
University of Maryland, College Park
7649 S. Library Lane, College Park, MD 20742
readlankester@gmail.com

Salig_2023_HigherEdCollectiveBargainingTestimony.p

Uploaded by: Lauren Salig

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Lauren Salig, M.S.

Address: 8201 16th St., Silver Spring, MD 20910

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Lauren Salig, and I am a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Maryland, where I have worked for three and a half years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our four-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a graduate teaching assistant, I assist in a class of 60 honors students. I run classroom activities, give lectures, grade papers, and meet with students outside of class, all in the service of aiding students' learning. This is in addition to conducting my dissertation research, service to my program and department, and involvement in the broader community through outreach work.

As a PhD student at the University of Maryland, I have experienced first-hand how low graduate assistant stipends can be. I am fortunate enough to have additional fellowships, but many of my peers do not; some are overworked and underpaid, especially when compared to the national average pay for graduate assistants. Without my extra fellowships (which most students don't have), I am unsure how I would be able to make ends meet. I am in my fourth year of my PhD program. Many graduate students work for the University for many years as they get their degree. Being able to have collective bargaining is a democratic right that we deserve. It can be a force for equity and allow for clearer communication between administration and employees. Many other universities already have collective bargaining to everyone's advantage—consider Montgomery College, for example. Collective bargaining rights could do a lot of good for improving the lives of graduate student employees by giving us power to advocate for changes when they are needed.

Members of the committee, employees' needs and voices deserve to be heard. The right to collective bargaining is a fundamental right; it should not be arbitrarily withheld from certain individuals at four-year public institutions. Therefore, I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

sb247- labor rights, state system- FIN 2-16-'23.pd

Uploaded by: Lee Hudson

Position: FAV



Delaware-Maryland Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Testimony Prepared for the
Finance Committee
on
Senate Bill 247
February 16, 2023
Position: **Favorable**

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to support the dignity of human effort by acknowledging the human right to organize and bargain collectively. I am Lee Hudson, assistant to the bishop for public policy in the Delaware-Maryland Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are a faith community with three judicatories in every part of our State.

Our community supports the human rights of workers, to include a right to organize and bargain collectively in the interest of fair wages and safe and just work conditions. A 2017 message among us concerning human rights as principle and instrument, affirmed a 1999 ELCA statement about justice in the *oikos*, the economy. Among the pillars of economic justice is, *(t)he principle of participation (to mean) all are entitled to be heard and to have their interests considered when decisions are made.* Support for the right to organize and bargain is in the written record of the predecessor bodies of our church going back at least to the 1930s; it is implied in the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and it is law in the United States.

For those reasons we support the right of workers to organize and bargain when that right is under public discussion; and we support **Senate Bill 247**. We ask your favorable report.

Lee Hudson

leo.heinrich.maria.bauer.pdf

Uploaded by: Leo Heinrich Maria Bauer

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Leo Bauer

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Leo Bauer and I am a graduate assistant at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for one and a half years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

Currently, I am a graduate research assistant gathering data for an NSF grant, even though my assignment can change to teaching every semester anew. I roughly work the 20 hours a week I am getting paid for, but I also see that most of my peers with a teaching assignment have to work more than that. Even though my work is interesting and I learn from it, it is not related to my own research and dissertation work. I code events for an observational data set, which in practice means that I sift through thousands of newspaper articles and find political events relevant for our data set project. In addition, I develop new methodologies of how to speed up and simplify this work as well as coordinating other graduate research assistants' work on the project. Hence, my 20-hour assignment is spent without directly contributing to my degree, as the data we gather is intended for the grant-funded project. The assistantship can still be useful for my future academic career as it offers co-authorship opportunities and the development of other skills, but no direct contribution to my dissertation work. Which is totally fine, but that is why we as graduate workers need to unionize.

First, as a principle I think that every worker should have the right to unionize. In my home country, Germany, many workers across economic sectors are unionized and collective bargaining is seen as a natural aspect in the employer-employee relationship. Second, I would personally benefit from unionization as a graduate assistant as it would enable us graduate assistants to fight for higher wages that actually ensure our economic survival. My stipend is below what I need to cover my cost of living. As an almost 30-year old, neither can I live alone, nor pay for flights to Europe to see my family without touching my pre-graduate school savings. In addition, as an international student I cannot work off-campus and thus don't have the possibility of improving my economic situation myself.

Members of the committee, the right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of

ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher education institutions in the county, and research shows that these institutions have not been disadvantaged by giving their graduate workers the right to collective bargaining. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

lilah.pdf

Uploaded by: Lilah --

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Lilah, Graduate Assistant

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

"Dear Chair [TBA], Vice Chair [TBA], and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Lilah Drafts-Johnson and I am a member of the University of Maryland College Park community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants), granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

I am a graduate assistant pursuing my MA at UMD and am currently considering whether or not to stay to do my PhD there. I want to stay at UMD because I love my program and the people in it, however, UMD's stipend rate for graduate workers is severely disproportionate to the actual cost of living in the area. I was offered a Flagship Fellowship to stay to do my PhD, which is the most competitive recruitment offer UMD can offer a prospective student and adds additional funding to the base stipend that my department gives graduate workers. Even with the highest award that UMD can give to a graduate worker, my salary will not meet the cost of living in College Park. The Dean of the Graduate School, in my notification letter, wrote that if the university managed to successfully recruit all of its Flagship honorees, the results would be "transformational for our institution." I counter that what would really be transformational for the institution would be for it to support ALL of its workers and give us our fundamental right to collectively bargain.

What a lot of people don't realize is that something like low pay or lack of worker protections isn't just a labor issue, it's a gender equity issue. Academia generally has a lot of steep power dynamics between graduate students just starting out and professors well-established in their fields and careers. My research at UMD focuses on preventing gender-based violence—things like sexual harassment and misconduct—in sport communities. As an advocate, I know that it's very dangerous to mix financial and job insecurity into a context where power differentials are already at play. That's how people get trapped in situations they aren't sure how to navigate and are unable to access the resources they need to get help.

Last fall, two of the students I taught in a core Kinesiology undergraduate course reached out to me and asked if I would participate in an interview for a speech and debate class in which they were enrolled. I agreed and was surprised when they asked me questions about the number of hours I worked and how much the university paid me. It turns out they were arguing for graduate workers to have the right to collectively bargain. Hopefully, this committee as

well as the university will see what my freshman undergraduate students do, that investing in the agency of educators at Maryland's public university system is not only the right thing to do, but the smart thing to do.

Respectfully,
Lilah Drafts-Johnson

Sincerely,
Lilah
Graduate Assistant
Department of Kinesiology
University of Maryland, College Park
4200 Valley Dr, College Park, MD 20742
ldraftsjohnson@gmail.com

SB 247 Testimony - Lindsey Muniak.pdf

Uploaded by: Lindsey Muniak

Position: FAV

**SB 247 Testimony: Favorable
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and
Graduate Assistants**

Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

I write as a University of Maryland alum and Baltimore City resident to **request your strong support for SB 247** – long-overdue legislation that would grant collective bargaining rights to graduate student workers, contingent faculty, and full-time faculty working in the University System of Maryland.

Like so many Marylanders you've been hearing from, I was shocked to learn the right to collectively bargain is prohibited by state law for USM educators in these categories. This is outrageous, regressive, and frankly embarrassing for this UMD alum. Fortunately, the General Assembly is in a position this session to repair this failure.

I urge you to issue a favorable report on SB 247, and to do everything in your power to ensure this bill makes it out of committee in the strongest possible form this session. Untenable working conditions in the higher education sector are increasingly recognized as a growing national problem, with especially sobering implications for the future of public institutions. We're past the point of pretending these employees don't need and deserve the same right to organize as workers in any other economic sector.

Every year this legislation fails to make it to a floor vote marks a failure of the General Assembly to recognize and act on the importance of fundamental labor rights. The passage of a strong SB 247 would do right by our workers, our students, and our state. Please support this legislation – your constituents are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Muniak
3722 Chestnut Ave
Baltimore, MD 21211

lining.wang.pdf

Uploaded by: Lining Wang

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Lining Wang, Teaching Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Lining Wang and I am a member of the University of Maryland community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants), granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

This issue matters to me personally because as a graduate teaching assistant in a PhD program, and someone with a disability, the current stipend offered by UMD is woefully inadequate for the cost of living in the DC area.

Coupled with hundreds of dollars of additional medical bills each month, the financial stress has worsened my health considerably, and made it harder to justify staying in the program.

Collective bargaining would allow graduate assistants to be paid more equitably per the cost of living, reducing the day to day stress that students must manage on top of their coursework, research, and other obligations.

A PhD program is already a highly challenging and difficult endeavor; when combined with disability, having dependents, economic marginalization, and/or other circumstances that require additional time and effort to manage, it can be next to impossible.

Higher pay competitive with peer institutions in high cost of living areas would be a tangible commitment to the retention and inclusion of marginalized students that UMD supposedly espouses, instead of perpetuating cycles of discrimination.

I believe that collective bargaining is a key piece of the solution to this inequity, by giving graduate assistants power to negotiate their pay, as well as other benefits such as medical and mental health.

Graduate research assistants do the bulk of the work in academia (particularly in STEM), while graduate teaching assistants are often expected to do much of the same work as professors while not being paid commensurably.

I believe collective bargaining is the only way to create a future for research, and teaching, that is sustainable, equitable, and inclusive for everyone.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lining Wang
Teaching Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
8125 Paint Branch Dr, College Park, MD 20742
lwang0@umd.edu

livingstone.imonitie.pdf

Uploaded by: Livingstone Imonitie

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Livingstone Imonitie, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Dear Chair [TBA], Vice Chair [TBA], and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Livingstone Imonitie and I am a member of the University of Maryland, College Park community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants), granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

This issue matters to me personally because I am currently a research and teaching assistant and I put in a lot of work in my job. It would be great to also have a say in the amount of money I receive at the end of the day. There is no University of Maryland without the graduate students but we are the least paid employees. I strongly appeal to you to give the graduate students a voice and a say in the community.

Sincerely,
Livingstone Imonitie
Graduate Assistant
Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
8106 Greenbelt Station Parkway, Greenbelt, Greenbelt, MD 20770
Livingstoneimonitie@gmail.com

louiqar.raschid.pdf

Uploaded by: Louiqa Raschid

Position: FAV



A BETTER UNIVERSITY IS POSSIBLE

 umdaaup@gmail.com

 umdaaup.org

 [@umdaaup](https://twitter.com/umdaaup)

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Louiqa Raschid

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Louiqa Raschid. I am a Dean's Professor at the University of Maryland where I hold appointments across several Colleges. I have been at Maryland for over three decades. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247 to grant collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students.

I will highlight several circumstances that I have personally experienced or witnessed, that have resulted in inequity, frustration and despair among our faculty and graduate students. Collective bargaining is an opportunity to provide us with the rights to address these challenges and will lead to a better university.

The first issue is gross salary inequity across various units of campus. I have been a leader of multi-disciplinary research teams and I work with faculty and graduate students across units. I have first hand experience of colleagues who provide the same high quality of research but whose compensation can differ significantly. While market forces cannot be eliminated, collective bargaining will provide faculty with better tools for negotiation.

The second issue is salary inversion which also occurs across many units. There are many senior and productive full professors who are sometimes paid less than the incoming junior assistant professors that they recruit and mentor. Again collective bargaining will help level these inequities.

I have mentored and employed graduate students for many decades. One of my greatest achievements has been mentoring these young scholars and helping them to deliver high

quality research output while facing major life challenges - giving birth, taking care of their children, or facing serious health challenges, etc. These scholars are at the mercy of a system that provides them with zero benefits during these periods. A scholar who does not have a caring and creative mentor is destined to fail or struggle. Collective bargaining will provide a tool to create better conditions for these valuable members of our campus.

The final situation concerns Professional Track (PTK) or other Adjunct or Part-Time faculty. While serving on the Executive Board of UMD AAUP, I have learned about the sometimes horrifying circumstances in which they work. This can range from the lack of an employment contract despite years of working in the same position, to not having any recourse when the terms of the contract are blatantly violated. There are few other professions / sectors where professionals may face such often hostile work environments and unfortunately may not have any means to correct the situation. Collective bargaining will provide a range of tools to address these injustices.

The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

luka.arsenjuk.pdf


Uploaded by: Luka Arsenjuk

Position: FAV



A BETTER UNIVERSITY IS POSSIBLE

 umdaaup@gmail.com

 umdaaup.org

 [@umdaaup](https://twitter.com/umdaaup)

Written Testimony Submitted to the Maryland Senate Finance Committee

By Luka Arsenjuk

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Luka Arsenjuk and I am an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have been working since 2011. I am also a member of the executive committee of the UMD chapter of the Association of American University Professors. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. Collective bargaining is a fundamental democratic right. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland as well.

Over the past twelve years of working at UMD, College Park, I have taught on average four courses per year, performed extensive service for my department, college, and the university, and engaged in student advising and internationally recognized research and publication activity. Over this same period, I have seen the working conditions of faculty, graduate student workers, and staff deteriorate due to increasing administrative bloat and mismanagement of the university's resources.

The list of problems faced by faculty in our universities is long, but let me offer some of the most important examples:

- (1) The existing model of shared governance in our universities—faculty senate in an advisory role—is not working. Faculty have no actual mechanism to substantively engage in financial and budgetary decision-making, nor are we able to meaningfully engage in determining our working and safety conditions.

- (2) As a result of the complete and irreparable failure of shared governance, decisions that get made at our institutions typically benefit those that have the power to make them: the university administrators. The ranks of UMD administrators have increased by 42.4% from 2015 to 2019 and an additional 8.4% from 2020 to 2022. During the same period, the number of full-time faculty rose by only 3.1%, while undergraduate enrollment increased by 16%. Instead of investing in the education of our students to better prepare them for civic life and professional careers, our university systematically invest in its own managerial class—a group of people that is typically not involved in teaching and pedagogical work.
- (3) University System of Maryland is slowly dismantling protections for academic security and freedom by decreasing the share of tenured faculty (down 6.9% at UMD-CP since 2014) and increasing the percentage of faculty in contingent, at-will forms of employment (up 19.3% at UMD-CP since 2014). Without the job security afforded by tenure, academic freedom is imperiled and universities have already begun to undermine their core task and may soon become unable to fulfill their public mission and their obligation to the state.

One could add to this list the fact that UMD (College Park) ranks second-to-last among its national peer institutions in cost of living-adjusted faculty wages and gender equity (the “gender pay gap”), and the rosy picture of the situation at our institutions that the administrators tend to present to the public shows itself to have very little to do with the reality experienced by those who actually make our universities run.

The right to collectively bargain would open the possibility for faculty and graduate student workers to meaningfully participate in the decision directing our higher education institutions and to begin reversing the troubling tendencies I have briefly sketched out above. It is by now a well-established fact that collective bargaining helps improve the quality of instruction by addressing ballooning faculty-to-student classroom ratios. Research shows that collective bargaining makes universities more effective: for instance, by increasing, student graduation rates. And it is also the case that collective bargaining would make our universities more efficient by preventing administrative bloat, making sure more state dollars go into the research and instruction that actually benefit Maryland residents. Finally, collective bargaining would not only offer faculty and graduate student workers the security and dignity that should belong to every working individual, it would also help our state’s university system to begin catching up to the top-level public university systems in this country. It is namely the case that among our national peer institutions those with collective bargaining for faculty and graduate student workers on their campuses on average significantly outrank those without collective bargaining.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of

ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and

indeed, to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Yours sincerely,

Luka Arsenjuk
Associate Professor
University of Maryland, College Park

lydia.quevedo.pdf

Uploaded by: Lydia Quevedo

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Lydia Quevedo, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

rights to collective bargaining will make significant differences in the lives of graduate students and faculty in our community.

I feel it is essential to emphasize that I am not writing out of self interest. My story is not the most sobering you will hear today. What has compelled me to sit down and write this when I have heaps of work and reading is my commitment to solidarity and my empathy for my peers. I cannot simply sit by while fundamental rights are kept from a workforce whose exploited labor contributes to a multi-billion-dollar industry.

As graduate students, my peers and I are both students and faculty. Any undergrad who has taken an introductory logic course can demonstrate how this is a contradiction of terms. For anyone who hasn't taken Logic 101, a contradiction of terms just means that the definition of one thing is the exact opposite of the other thing. The two things--our being students and our being faculty--cannot be true at the same time. Our rights and responsibilities as students directly conflict with those we hold as faculty.

Being students, we are expected to complete our coursework in a satisfactory and timely manner; as faculty, we face a daily responsibility to the core functions of the university: teaching undergraduates and conducting research. But where, exactly, is the conflict? The answer: wherever is most beneficial for the university to deny our rights as workers. UMD could not run without graduate students, just as it could not run without adjunct lecturers, lab workers, or administrators. Yet when we ask for our worth--when we even broach the subject of collective bargaining--we are reminded that we are students first, and we are lucky to even be here. Students do not need the right for collective bargaining. We went through intense competition to be here. Even if we are paid by the university, a significant portion of that money is being used to pay for our presence. Therefore, being here is a privilege, and you do not need to collectively bargain about a privilege. That would make us entitled, and the worst thing we can be as young folks is entitled.

It works the other way, too. If we appeal to our status as students for lenience or flexibility, we are reminded that we, too, are faculty, and are subject to the same rules and restrictions. To provide an example, this means we are not expected to follow the same break schedule as regular students, a reality which heavily contributes to chronic burnout. This narrative that we should be lucky is pervasive. After all, what are we even complaining for? Isn't all this what grad school is all about? We should have known what we were getting ourselves into. After all, it's just a few years of suffering. Besides, our supervisors went through it too, and they survived. If we are truly committed to our research, our fields, and

our departments, we then it shouldn't matter. If we want to succeed, we should resign ourselves to eating ramen every night and splitting with three housemates. Just suck it up, take out a couple loans, and call it a day.

Yes, we're lucky to be here. Those of us who have received funding are especially so; we don't need to pick up side jobs during the summer or (God forbid!) during the semester. We can focus on our work. The fact that we're struggling to complete all that work is nothing in the grand scheme of things. We're making a sacrifice for our research, and shouldn't our work mean the world to us? Otherwise, why are we even in grad school?

All this amounts to a simple fact: our passion and enthusiasm are exploited by the university. We may be lucky to spend our days pursuing something meaningful, but we are hardly fortunate. What's fortunate about a work culture so intense that burnout, chronic depression and anxiety, and elevated risk for self-harm are simply par for the course? What's fortunate about working fifty hours a week and worrying about whether you're going to be able to afford rent? What's fortunate about watching prices tick up in your local supermarket, knowing that in a month or two it's going to be a rare luxury to cook a comfort meal from your home culture?

It's not like we have much of a choice here. If we can't take it? Well, obviously we're not tough enough for academia. We should just forget it and drop out.

This narrative is problematic for many reasons. For starters, it continues the broken trope that we young folks should work and struggle now because our forebears did the same thing before us. Suck it up, we'll be able to enjoy life later. But the promise of economic stability is a pipe dream for my generation. Not all of us will land cushy tenure-track jobs. And with a recession and climate crisis looming, it's questionable whether we have the same quality of life to look forward to.

Furthermore, although the university loves to tout its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), depriving graduate students of the right for collective bargaining is a massive institutional barrier to DEI in academia and the workforce. How can students from diverse backgrounds (in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic class, language proficiency, and ability) succeed in a space that is not designed for us if we also have to worry about keeping the lights on? Without a safety net--like family with money--students from diverse backgrounds are in an even more precarious position. Should we speak up and rock the boat, risking our funding and plunging us into uncertainty? Or should we just grit our teeth, suffer the exploitation, and get to the end of the degree, whatever it takes? Again, it's not like we have a choice.

As a graduate student from an ethnicity underrepresented in my field, the right to collective bargaining will obviously impact my life in diverse and positive ways. But I am moved by solidarity. If I am as lucky as I have been told, then hopefully my appeal has invited you, too, to consider how this fundamental right will remove institutional barriers and expand protections for an extremely vulnerable workforce. Please vote in favor of SB247/HB275.

Sincerely,
Lydia Quevedo
Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
1401 Marie Mount Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742
lquevedo@umd.edu

marcus.aaron.johnson.pdf

Uploaded by: Marcus Aaron Johnson

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By [Marcus Johnson, Assistant Professor]**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Marcus Johnson and I am an Assistant Professor at UMD College Park, where I have worked for 2 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I am a second-year assistant professor (tenure track) at UMD College Park. I am a young, Black man. I am one of the “lucky ones” because tenure-track positions have become much harder to attain over the last few decades. When I finished my PhD studies in 2017, I received the President’s Postdoctoral Fellowship at U Maryland. Along with 3 Black women fellows, we were the inaugural cohort in a program that promised to help advance the careers of young scholars in that very uncertain space between graduate school and the tenure track. Unfortunately, when we got to UMD to do our postdocs, we learned that each of our home departments had unequal knowledge about how to transition postdoctoral fellows into tenure track positions. We would also later learn that our academic departments had unequal interest in helping us to make the transition. This despite the fact that the UMD Presidential Postdoctoral Fellowship Program is modeled after similar programs in the University of California system that provide a direct path from postdoc to the tenure track. Ultimately, my path to landing a tenure track position at UMD came from the institutional influence and the extra efforts of my postdoctoral mentor. And if we contrast this to the experience of the other fellows in my cohort (all women of color), none of whom are at UMD today, we can start to see how gender and racial disparities get created when academic workers (such as postdoctoral fellows) are excluded from decision making processes that are critical to career advancement.

If you extrapolate from my experience, we can see how UMD would end up with **1,339 tenured and tenure-track** faculty and more than **3,392 full-time PTK** faculty— the latter are paid significantly less, with a significantly higher teaching load, and much less job security. From 2014 to 2022, the number of **tenure-track faculty** fell 6.9%, while the number of non-tenure track faculty rose to 19.3%. UMD also has the second lowest level of gender salary disparity among its peer institutions. Because workers are not allowed to collectively bargain together, we miss the mark of achieving equitable outcomes in employment, faculty diversity, and compensation—all values that are embraced by this legislative body and our higher education institutions in the USM.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

maria.joao.lobo.antunes.pdf

Uploaded by: Maria Joao Lobo Antunes

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Maria João Lobo Antunes, Associate Professor, Towson University
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Maria João and I am an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice at Towson University. I have lived in Maryland for 20 years now, and am raising all 4 of my children here. I began at Towson as an adjunct professor, teaching at night. I secured a lecturer position in early 2013 and a tenure-track job beginning in August 2015. My experience in different academic roles provides me with a unique perspective on the Bill being proposed. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

Towson University has traditionally been seen as a “teaching” institution, which means professors have a higher teaching load, than at University of Maryland- College Park, for example. Faculty routinely teach 3 courses in the Fall and 4 courses in the Spring (the 3-4 teaching load), while also providing individualized support to over 50 advisees, each semester. This means that faculty can have anywhere between 100 to 150 students per semester, in addition to the advisee roster. Unlike some of my colleagues, I am also a prolific grant writer, and in 2016 was awarded a federal grant to study residential mobility and youth delinquency (<https://nij.ojp.gov/bio/maria-joao-lobo-antunes>). Because of the very limited input of faculty regarding their workload, I was unable to secure a course release, which meant in addition to my usual 3-3 courseload of 3 classes per semester (we were given a course release for the 50+ advising load) I supervised a graduate student and ran a National Institute of Justice project. This placed a great toll on my mental and physical health. But there was really no-one to turn to or seek help with revising my workload but contributed financially to my department and institution.

Recently, Towson has made a push to become a Research 2 institution. With this designation comes more opportunities for federal and possible state fundings, but the benefits are not likely to be experienced by faculty. Faculty have had no input in how the transition is to take place, no voice in the discussion and the process has been opaque. For example, we have been told that faculty need to pursue more grant funding, and if we did, we would have course releases to help support our work while also mentoring grad students. However, Towson also decided to make advising obligatory for all full-time faculty. Last academic year I crafted 6 federal grants, and yet continue to teach advanced courses in criminology- 3 each semester. A dear colleague of mine

has been awarded several grants and is teaching a 3-4, meaning 3 classes in the fall and now 4 in the spring while also managing these grants. Faculty have virtually no avenue for reprieve or to seek help addressing these issues. There are also grave problems with diversity, equity, and inclusion, but faculty are unable to address these problems without fear of administrative retaliation. To be clear, as I am sure those in opposition to the bill will state, faculty must provide a workload agreement whereby they designate percentages of effort across research, teaching and committee service. Therefore, in *theory* faculty could suggest for example 60% teaching, 30% research and 10% service, or any combination. In *practice* faculty are instructed to put down 75-80% teaching, 15-20% research and whatever remains for service, but also expected to produce quality research and grant-activity. Faculty dedicated to both research and teaching often work beyond the 40 hours a week, well into the weekend. Without the support of collective bargaining, faculty are subjected to the whim of administration who will readily state there are mechanisms for research support but never provide such support. From an administrative perspective this makes sense- require more work with less financial or institutional support and without any oversight or transparency. Towson University does not even have an ombudsperson to help navigate these issues, which makes collective bargaining for many of us a beacon of hope.

I would also like to share insight into the working conditions of adjunct faculty, as I was one. Adjuncts are part-time instructors. They teach anywhere from 1 to 5 courses in a semester, frequently across different institutions. Adjuncts are paid \$4000 per course, per semester, which means they receive \$4000 total from August to December or January to May, unless they teach more. Adjuncts are not entitled to benefits and although many teach during the after hours, they are required to pay for parking which is about \$200 per semester. We have advocated for these fees to be waived for adjuncts, but to no avail. Moreover, adjuncts often do not have office space, and therefore are unable to meet with students. When there was a COVID stipend given to faculty, adjuncts were not eligible, even though they were the group of faculty who most needed the help.

Currently, the system is set-up whereby faculty have little say in shared governance. Administrators can impose conditions without consequence. Ultimately, students are the ones affected, as professors face burnout and disengagement from academia. Starting before the pandemic, but certainly during and after it, we are seeing more educators leave, because of pervasive harassment, abuse, low wages and lack of support. The right to collective bargaining is a first step in creating a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable higher education in Maryland, that will benefit students and faculty alike.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the country, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year

public institutions from this path just no longer make sense, especially as they ultimately impact those we hold to be most important in our professions- the students. I again therefore call for a **favorable** report to SB 247.

Thank you,
Maria João Lobo Antunes

matthew.connell.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Connell

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Matthew Connell, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Matthew Connell and I am a graduate researcher at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for two years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. Workers in higher education in Maryland should be granted the same right to collective bargaining as other state employees, as well as the community college and non-academic university workforce. This bill will provide this fundamental democratic right.

In my graduate work, I have taught physics lab courses, performed laboratory research, and mentored new members of my research group. Through these experiences, I have seen how the culture of work as a UMD graduate student can be made more equitable with the right to collective bargaining. As a TA, I worked in classrooms of 20 students for up to 18 hours a week, while also grading for several hours a week and helping students by email daily. This work regularly exceeded the stipulated 20 hours put forward in the graduate assistant contract. As a graduate assistant, much of my time is spent performing cell microscopy experiments, reviewing relevant literature, and writing on my results. However, a significant proportion of my work every day goes outside of the development of my dissertation, to support the facility and research group. I perform lab chores, such as sterilizing work spaces and equipment, and ordering and stocking materials for the lab. I also mentor a first-year graduate student and an undergrad who work in the lab, which requires hours per week of planning and teaching these students how to perform independent research. I train my mentees to perform experimental procedures, and work with them on data analysis and presentation. This work is a large part of my job and does not directly contribute to my dissertation project.

I support this bill to provide the community of graduate students and academic faculty in the USM with the power to protect each other and earn the security that they deserve. Collective bargaining will allow graduate researchers to organize for greater equity in wages for the large amount of critical work we do for our universities. GA stipends are well below the cost of living in Maryland, with the UMD gap between cost of living and wages being among the highest of its peer institutions. Extending the right to bargain to UMD students allows us to bridge this disparity and make GA work more sustainable to life in Maryland. Administration currently shows little regard for students' needs; friends in my cohort have found inconsistencies in their salaries that left them underpaid by their own contracts, and they had to personally address this problem with administration to receive their actual salary. There is little accountability in the current employment system. Issues from low and inconsistent wages are exacerbated for international graduate students, who are unable to take employment outside of the university. My close friends and coworkers who are foreign students are in precarious positions and dependent on their advisors and administration to find future employment and continue with their lives in the US. If this bill is passed, our community can work to improve job protections, establish clear lines of communication between workers and advisors, and ensure the safety of all grad students' living situation.

Members of the committee, the state of Maryland has seen that the right of collective bargaining is necessary for a democratic workplace, including in public education institutions. State employees have long been given this right, along with students and faculty at community colleges and many peer public and private colleges and universities. There is no reason to withhold it from the critical academic and graduate workers at our 4-year public institutions. The fundamental right to use our voice for an equitable and secure workplace is being withheld. Therefore, I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

matthew.miller.pdf

Uploaded by: Matthew Miller

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

**By Dr. Matthew Thomas Miller, Assistant Professor, University of Maryland, College Park
SB 247**

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Matthew Thomas Miller, Assistant Professor of Persian Literature and Digital Humanities at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD-CP), where I have worked in this role for 5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247.

I am an educator and researcher working at the nexus of Islamic, Persian, and literary studies and digital humanities. I teach brilliant students at UMD-CP in courses on topics ranging from Sufi poetry and Iranian cinema to gender and sexuality in the Islamic world and digital approaches to the study of culture. Teaching is a passion of mine, but I also am a dedicated researcher, publishing widely in my first few years here and bringing in over \$3 million dollars in grants in the last four years alone.

I support the right to collectively bargain because I am *deeply* concerned about the health of our university system, both at the national and University System of Maryland (USM) levels. Speaking specifically to my own USM institution situation, UMD-CP, which we have studied in depth,¹ how can a university remain a healthy, enriching workplace that provides the state of Maryland with world-leading research and educational outcomes when:

- The fastest rising categories of spending are not the central missions of the university, i.e., to research and educate, but rather the categories dedicated to expanding the top ranks of the university administrative structure.
- Salaries for our faculty (even those who received COLA and merit raises), after adjusted for inflation, actually decreased by 4% between FY 2010-2022.
- Top administrators in the academic and athletic divisions of UMD-CP, who regularly make more than \$300,000 per year, increase their own salaries and number of support staff while telling the faculty and graduate students that “there is no money” for *real* salary increases, new permanent faculty positions, or professional development funds.
- The administration is allowed to substantially raise its revenues through increasing student enrollment and tuition but then turn around and push more of the institution’s

¹ See our full financial analysis here, conducted by an outside expert:
<http://umdaaup.org/heres-whats-in-umds-wallet-the-results-of-the-comprehensive-independent-financial-analysis/>

teaching responsibilities onto its lowest paid and most precariously employed educators (graduate students and contingent faculty), effectively turning the job of teaching UMD-CP's students into a gig job with the corresponding poverty level of wages.

- The administration permits almost no faculty oversight of its financial decisions (showing clearly the myth of “faculty governance”), allowing it to do outrageous things, such as charging all students hundreds of dollars in mandatory fees every year that are nothing more than a subsidy for the athletics program. *This accounting trick of calling a mandatory student fee a “revenue” stream for the athletics program took nearly \$132.5 million from the pockets of Maryland students and parents between 2013-2020 and it continues until today.*

These same trends can be seen at the USM level more broadly where instructional faculty are paid as little as \$2,100 per course (which equals ~\$14/hr for these instructors with the highest professional degree possible, a PhD) and cost of living-adjusted salaries at many USM institutions are among the lowest when compared to peer institutions.

What these data show clearly is that, while perhaps well intentioned, university administrators are increasingly turning USM institutions into big businesses. Collective bargaining for faculty and graduate students can aid in checking this administrative overreach and help return USM institutions to their core mission of providing high quality education and innovative research to the state of Maryland. We are educators. We care the most about the quality of education students are receiving and we know what we need best to provide Maryland students with the best education possible. We are researchers. We know what we need to do the best research. Let us advocate for ourselves and our students. Let us help refocus USM institutions and make them the best educational and research institutions possible.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

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Uploaded by: Mauro Resmini

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Mauro Resmini

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Mauro Resmini and I am Associate Professor of Cinema and Media Studies and Italian at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 10 years, first as a part-time contingent faculty, and then as tenure-track—and now tenured—faculty. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach four classes a year, at least one of which is a large lecture course, extremely popular, with 100 students enrolled. This class would simply be impossible to teach without the labor provided by two teaching assistants. They are most often graduate students, but I have also worked with contingent faculty. They attend all my lectures (twice a week), lead two discussion sections with 25 students each once a week, and grade students' quizzes, exams, and essays. This is for just one course: whether they are graduate students or contingent faculty, they are extremely likely to be assisting on or teaching another course, at the very least. Meanwhile, their primary focus remains to complete requirements for their degree or actively look for a permanent position—or, in the case of graduate students approaching their degree, both at the same time. This happens in a context in which Graduate Assistants stipends are well below the cost-of-living—something that became strikingly clear when I heard that several of my Teaching Assistants had to work another non-academic job just to survive. In fact, at UMD the gap between the cost-of-living and stipends is the largest compared to peer institutions, and in fields as disparate as Atmospheric Science and English Literature, UMD stipends are in real terms at (or near) the bottom on a national level. Foreign students are in a particularly precarious position since they are prohibited from working outside the university and their spouses do not have work visas. In sum, graduate assistants are overworked and underpaid. The same holds true for contingent faculty. There are 3,392 full time and over 900 part time contingent faculty at UMD (versus 1,399 tenured and tenure-track faculty). Their work conditions are precarious and their duties liable to change without notice, entirely exposed as they are to the whims of department chairs. And yet, the department to which I am primarily affiliated (the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures) would simply not be able to function—both at the level of teaching and advising—without their underpaid, precarious labor.

From 2014 to 2022, UMD saw the number of tenure-track and tenured faculty fall by 6.9%, and the number of contingent faculty increase by 19.3% in that same eight-year span. It is clear that this process of deliberate, structural “adjunctification” at UMD allows the university to rely on cheap, precarious labor whose demands can be more easily silenced or outright ignored (as it has been the case with the meet-and-confer process put in place by university administration in 2010). The proposed bill, if turned into law, would offer the opportunity to change this untenable situation. On the other hand, the shrinking of tenure-track and tenured faculty has also been accompanied by a persistent disparity between UMD salaries and its peers’. COLA-adjusted salaries for tenured and tenure-track faculty are the second lowest among UMD’s peers (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Ohio State University, for instance, offer salaries that are 58% and 48% higher than UMD, respectively). Passage of SB 247 may or may not lead to unionization, but it sets the stage for a democratic process in which university workers can engage in open debate and make an informed decision. The proposed bill, if enacted into law, would offer the opportunity to significantly improve working conditions for all workers in the UM System, from graduate students to contingent faculty, to tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Members of the committee, the right to collective bargaining is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

HB0275_SB0247 (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Michele Copper

Position: FAV

LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY

Bill: **HB0275/SB0247 State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants**

Organization: Salisbury University AAUP Chapter

Submitted by: Tom Goyens, Chapter Lead

Position: **FAVORABLE**

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY AAUP CHAPTER SUPPORTS STATE PERSONNEL - COLLECTIVE BARGAINING - FACULTY, PART-TIME FACULTY, AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

The Salisbury University AAUP Chapter supports HB0275/SB0247, which would provide collective bargaining rights to all faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants employed by the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and Saint Mary's College.

Faculty are currently exempt from collective bargaining rights. Due to the inability to engage in collective bargaining, we have limited power and ability to advocate for workplace protections that are granted to unionized workers. The COVID-19 pandemic brought the need for workplace protections into the forefront. During the pandemic, faculty had little to no say over decisions made by university administrators in regards to vaccination and masking policies, or the ability to work remotely or in person regardless of their ability or inability to do so due to medical or childcare issues. Faculty were expected to quickly pivot from in-person to fully online learning, resulting in extensive retraining in digital learning platforms without additional compensation or reduction of duties in other areas.

There is significant salary compression of faculty in the system. New faculty are hired at current market rates, while existing faculty do not receive regular pay increases. This results in new faculty who have little teaching experience making a salary similar to seasoned faculty with years of experience. Establishing collective bargaining rights will help reduce salary compression and ensure that faculty receive a fair salary, commensurate with their experience.

Faculty that are full-time, non-tenure track experience inequitable work environments in comparison to their tenure-track peers. Research on our campus finds that there are inconsistent expectations for faculty workload from department to department; that there are confusions regarding their benefits and rights; that full time, non-tenure track faculty lack a clear pathway to attaining tenure-track status; and that full-time, non-tenure track faculty feel that they are "second class citizens" in our campus community, despite often times having the same degrees, training, and experience.

Part-time, contractual, and graduate assistants (who serve in faculty roles) hold tenuous teaching positions. There are significant pay disparities, with part-time faculty being paid less than full-time faculty teaching the same course. Since 2019, Salisbury University has been giving part-time faculty adjuncts COLA raises, however, these raises come from the University's budget, and are subject to University decisions. There is no contract for the COLA increases, but rather a "gentlemen's agreement," which can be revoked at any time. Thus, gaining the ability to engage in collective bargaining would do much to give these teachers greater say over their conditions of employment in ways which reduce treatment of part-time faculty as "second class citizens."

Part-time faculty are employed based on class enrollment. This means that faculty can have their classes canceled at the last minute, leaving them without a job. Because teaching requires intense preparation prior to the first day of classes, this means that part-time faculty whose courses are canceled last minute

have already invested time working, without compensation. There is currently no process for these faculty to obtain fair compensation for their labor.

Finally, faculty who are unionized also effectively barter for improvements in student services. Thus, the right to collective bargaining can improve the student experience.

Salisbury University's AAUP Chapter supports HB0275/SB0247 and believes it would improve working conditions, create more equitable treatment among university faculty, and allow for codification of practices which are currently done at the discretion of good-willed administrators. We request a **FAVORABLE** report in Committee.

michele.marie.mason.pdf

Uploaded by: Michele Marie Mason

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Michele M. Mason, Associate Professor**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Michele M. Mason and I am an Associate Professor of Japanese Cultural Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for over 16 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach three courses a year, sit on numerous committees, am a faculty advisor for UMD's Language House, oversee two student organizations, and liaise with and support the singular Gordon W. Prange Collection of postwar documents from the era of the U.S. occupation of Japan. In recent years, I have become the one tenured faculty member who supports the Korean program, serving as the Faculty Liaison for the Big Ten Academic Alliance's Korean Course-share program, making it possible for our students to take advanced courses on Korean history, literature, poetry, and culture. I am currently the Director of the Japanese Program. In addition to my many administrative tasks connected to this position, I also mentor junior scholars and oversee the language instructors and graduate-student teaching assistants.

Our program would not have the national respect for its rigor and comprehensiveness were it not for our invaluable PTK faculty who came to UMD with Master Degrees and years of teaching experience. They are dedicated well beyond what their salaries' remunerates, taking on all manner of extra committee work for major advising, overseeing the foreign language placement tests, and, in recent years, going above and beyond to prepare brand new curricula, homework, exams, tutorials, and more so that we could adopt a new textbook that was more in keeping with not only our rigorous learning outcomes but also our commitment to having our female students and students of color better represented in the materials.

The COVID 19 pandemic radically altered the fundamental structures and demands on our time. Going above and beyond the extra daily work to retool for online teaching was a heavy burden. In 2020, all of us in the Japanese program rallied to aid students in adapting to the new format

but also care for their bodies and mental health. And still we had a brilliant student die by suicide. At the same time, we have been called on to prepare for a mass shooting events while some of the doors in our building are not hung to be able to barricade the door. The need to support our students in so many new ways has taken a heavy toll on all of us. But now that we can see some movement toward normalcy, the expectations remain as high as when we in the middle of the pandemic. Much of the workload that we willing took on during a time of crisis has been normalized as part of the regular expectations. The situation is unsustainable.

For these many reasons, I urge you to do all you can to help and support those of us who are dedicated to our work and have given so generously in this extremely trying time. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, and in Maryland has clearly been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,

Michele Mason

Michele M. Mason (She/Her/Hers)
Japanese Program Director
Associate Professor, Japanese Cultural Studies
School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
4224 Jimenez Hall
College Park, MD 20742
mmmason@umd.edu (n.b. 3 'm's)

Micheline Wilson

Uploaded by: Micheline Wilson

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee**

By Sydney Sharpstene

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 Sydney Sharpstene and I am a Full-Time Lecturer at The University of Maryland. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to HB 275. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach a 4-4 schedule (4 classes each semester), but can still barely make ends meet for my family. I rely on teaching in the summer to make ends meet and also have a second job. The average salary of members of Strategic Planning Committee was over \$300,000 last year, yet my salary is \$52,400; why? And why are faculty members not valued for their feedback in committees? In the 16-member search committee for new Dean of Graduate School, includes two faculty members and two students.

I love working here, but conditions are often precarious. Contracts can be given at the last minute, leaving little to no time for preparation. I personally did not have access to the required materials yet on my first day of teaching because I had only been hired for a week. I also did not get to complete new faculty orientation because I was hired too late in the summer.

There are 3,392 full-time PTK faculty at UMD, and many of us in the PTK program can't make ends meet. For instructional PTK like me, a full-time course load is 4-4, double what tenure-track faculty teach. Instructional faculty can earn as little as \$5,000 for a course, roughly what I receive. Many part-time faculty work at a number of different campuses, or multiple jobs just to make ends meet.

Even worse is that PTK faculty do not speak out about work conditions because they fear losing their job. As a result, we lack input from the people teaching most of the credit hours (around 70%) on our campus. Many faculty members lack the resources to serve students: offices and computers; funds for professional development; the ability to buy books. In our department, we don't even have a fully staffed writing center due to budget constraints. I have several students who would like to visit the center, but it is always booked with appointments, and it is next to impossible to get one that isn't a month out. I would love for my voice (and the voice of my colleagues to be heard on this, but no one listens to us.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not

only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to HB 275. Thank you for your time.

Sydney Sharpstene

michelle.mazurek.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Mazurek

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Michelle Mazurek, Associate Professor
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

as a faculty member in the computer science department at the University of Maryland, I interact with graduate students every day as my students, my mentees, my research assistants, my teaching assistants, my colleagues, and my friends. Without graduate student employees, I simply could not accomplish my research and teaching goals. Graduate students do much of the work that supports the hundreds of millions of dollars of external research funding the university receives each year, and much of the work that leads to the research breakthroughs and awards that the university is justifiably proud of. Graduate students also do much of the work that allows the computer science department to scale up the undergraduate curriculum to support continually increasing enrollment, even while the number of faculty available to teach classes in the department has not increased.

However, graduate students are not treated and compensated in accordance with their critical role in university life. Our best-paid graduate students in computer science receive a stipend significantly below the living wage in Prince George's County and significantly less than in many graduate programs, even those in locations where the cost of living is substantially lower than here in Maryland. In fact, it is comparable to the salary I received as a graduate student more than 10 years ago, in a much less expensive location. Empowering graduate students to negotiate for living wages -- and for compensation commensurate to their enormous contributions to the university -- is the right thing to do for the students, but it will also improve the university's ability to attract the best and brightest new students.

Salaries are not the only important issue for graduate students. Our traineeship model for PhD students has many wonderful benefits, including the ability to build close working relationships, as well as lifelong collaborations, between advisers and advisees. But it also creates structural risks of exploitation, because advisers have significant power over their students and few checks on their authority. Empowering graduate students to negotiate working conditions will add equity to that relationship and ensure that graduate students are treated as the valuable employees they are. This balance can help to ensure that a good-faith mentor-mentee relationship can thrive.

Graduate students are at the heart of the university. I strongly support their right to collectively bargain, enabling them to protect their rights and build the kind of security that can springboard long-term success. SB247/HB275 is not only the ethically correct choice, but also the practically correct choice, to maintain and increase the long-term strength of the university, and I strongly urge you to support it.

Sincerely,
Michelle Mazurek
Associate Professor
Computer Science and UMIACS
University of Maryland, College Park
8125 Paint Branch Drive, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20910
mmazurek@gmail.com

michelle.moyer.pdf

Uploaded by: Michelle Moyer

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Michelle Moyer, Teaching Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Dear Chair [TBA], Vice Chair [TBA], and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Michelle Moyer and I am a member of the UMBC community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants), granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

This issue matters to me personally because I work two jobs in addition to my teaching and research responsibilities as a teaching assistant. I do not know of any graduate students who are able to survive comfortably on our teaching stipend alone, despite working more than 50 or 60 hours a week on average. This bill would give us the freedom TO DECIDE if a union would better serve our needs, and give underrepresented students a louder voice. As you know, this does not instantly create a union but would simply provide our student communities with the agency to choose. Additionally, students in other departments are paid substantially more or less than in my department despite working just as hard, which I believe is unequitable.

Sincerely,
Michelle Moyer
Teaching Assistant
Biological Sciences
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
14318 Beaker Court, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866
mmoyer1@umbc.edu

Tropin UMGC Senate Finance February 16.pdf

Uploaded by: Mitchell Tropin

Position: FAV

February 16, 2023

RE: Senate Bill 0247 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Support

Chairman Griffith and Senate Finance Committee Members,
My name is Mitchell Tropin, I teach at the University of Maryland Global Campus and serve as an officer of its Adjunct Faculty Association.

I am here to urge passage of SB 0247, which would give faculty and graduate students at University System of Maryland institutions something that every other state employee already enjoys and deserves—the right to collective bargaining.

I know USM schools, having taught at five of them, besides UMGC. I taught at the University of Maryland College Park, Towson, Morgan State, and University of Baltimore. Each school is unique in its own way.

However, they also have something in common: their faculty are all working hard to give their students the tools, skills, and knowledge that will enable them to achieve a good, solid middle-class life. That's terrific.

But you know what also would be terrific? Making sure that same hard-working faculty also enjoy a good middle-class life.

Part-time faculty often make up 50 percent of USM teaching staffs. But they are underpaid, not making a living wage.

In addition, collective bargaining would give faculty and grad students a real voice. The playwright Athol Fugard once wrote: a man who cannot speak for himself is not a man; he is a ghost. We may not be ghosts but we are invisible, unable to speak with administrations.

From serving on UMGC's AFA, I can tell you they are no substitute for a real union. My AFA only occasionally meets with the administration. They listen but nothing changes. For effective shared governance, USM faculties need a union.

Let me conclude, I also teach at Montgomery College which has unions, and I'm proud of how the unions for the last 10 years have worked effectively with MC leadership for the benefit of the college's entire community. University faculty deserve no less. Thank you very much.

I call on you to vote yes on SB 0247 and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

nate.beard.pdf

Uploaded by: Nate Beard

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Nate Beard, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Graduate assistants are teaching, research, and administrative employees. I am currently a teaching assistant teaching undergraduates about science and technology development, history, ethics, and policy, which is a part of the accreditation requirement for engineering programs and is crucial for our future technologists, researchers, and professionals to learn. I have been a research assistant. My research has included studying and supporting digital privacy rights that protect our freedoms at the state and federal level, as well as studying how student athletes in higher education collect and use data to advance not only their athletic goals but their professional and educational aspirations. While related to my dissertation research, this work does not directly contribute to the work that I am required to do to complete my PhD. My dissertation research aims to further advance our understandings of the ethical and social implications of surveillance, automation, and the future of work.

In general, graduate assistants do the everyday work that keeps the university running. We teach classes?many of us multiple classes a semester, and often without support?and design curriculum, hold office hours for students, and perform many other duties above and beyond what is expected of us. And what is expected of us is often unclear because we don't have mutual and democratic say over expectations. This often leads to overwork too?many of us working well over the 20 hours/week that we are told to spend on our assistantships, and on top of doing our own research, which is expected to serve the public.

Despite all of this, we receive poverty wages and are denied adequate parental leave, appropriate labor protections and grievance proceders, protections against harassment and abuse, and a voice in our workplace?which is also students' learnings spaces.

When I started my program in late 2019, I was making around \$22,900 before taxes for 9.5 months out of the year (we are not guaranteed summer appointments and pay), which is about \$1,700/month during my appointment after taxes and fees. This does not include the fees (we pay our employer to work for them?more than \$800/semester for the first two years). I and the majority of other grads are rent burdened: we spend more than one third of our monthly pay check on rent. This forces us to take out loans and go into debt (which I have), and negatively impacts diversity by preventing the inclusion of graduates from poor and historically marginalized and oppressed backgrounds and communities. This negatively affects our teaching and research, undermines the university's public service mission, contradicts our university's values and democratic principles it purportedly espouses.

While we do the majority of teaching and research, the university has decided to increase spending on athletics?paying coaches over \$700,000 a year?and increase the hiring of

administrators and upper management?who make on average around \$260,000 a year?while decreasing tenure-track professor jobs. This has made the university rely on teaching assistants and contingent faculty. As PhDs, we are required to have tenured professors on our dissertation committee, but as the university decreases tenure-track positions, they are increasing graduate students, which is ironically going to lead to limiting the ability of the university to compete with other universities and to produce innovative research.

The right to collectively bargain is a democratic right?a right already granted to graduate assistants at private universities by the NLRB, graduates and other workers at public universities in just about every other majority Democrat state in the country, and employees at community colleges in Maryland. It is also a human right enshrined in Article 23 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. And it is a human, democratic, and labor right because it provides a path to remedy the issues hurting us and other workers outlined here.

The right to collectively bargain is a crucial solution to these issues because it guarantees us a democratic voice in decisions that affect our workplace, working conditions, and our livelihoods. The university says that it has shared governance in place, but those systems and processes have failed. The evidence for this is not only demonstrated by the poor decision-making of USM leadership and mismanagement of funds (coming from tax payers), but it is also demonstrated by the fact that the meet-and-confer process established in 2012 has not led to better working conditions. Issues such as unlivable wages, unregulated hours, lack of childcare, unclear job expectations, insufficient grievance procedures, workplace abuse, harassment, and exploitation, disproportionate rates of mental health issues, and the lack of other basic workplace protections and support systems still persist. The administration has not been responsive to these issues, and the way to remedy this is to grant us the legal protections and rights that other employees get.

My friend and colleague testified before this committee in 2020. Not long after, she had to drop out of her PhD program during the pandemic. Even though we're not supposed to get jobs outside of our assistantships, many of us have to, and my colleague still couldn't make ends meet when working as an Uber driver on top of teaching and research duties. Unfortunately, this is not uncommon.

I love this university, the work that I do, and my student, colleagues, and professors, and I want all of us to succeed and live safe, secure, and dignified lives. As someone whose work is dedicated to social justice?studying social, ethical, and political dimensions of technology innovation?I honestly believe that this bill is a step in the right direction. So I thank you for considering this bill, and I urge lawmakers to support this bill that would give GAs and faculty a voice in creating a dignified, equitable, and supportive workplace and living conditions for all GAs.

Sincerely,
Nate Beard
Graduate Assistant
College of Information Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
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natebeard04@gmail.com

neel.ahuja.pdf

Uploaded by: Neel Ahuja

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Neel Ahuja, Professor of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

To the members of the Senate finance committee,

My name is Neel Ahuja and I am a tenured professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have served as Director of Undergraduate Studies and Director of Graduate Studies in the Harriet Tubman Department of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. I am a scholar whose research and teaching focuses on the relationships of race and racism to environmental questions which broadly affect human health and community well-being across borders. I wish to express my support for collective bargaining rights for academic workers of all kinds, having experienced the importance of this fundamental right of association throughout my career. I was a member of my graduate student union at the University of California, where I advocated alongside many other graduate student workers for our first systemwide contract. As a young worker in my first full-time job, this advocacy was pivotal for securing basic needs, most significantly adequate health care. As a professor today, I have spoken with many graduate students, non-tenured faculty, and tenured faculty who see the lack of collective bargaining rights as a crucial missing gap in their ability to adequately work toward a just and equitable university. As one brief example: In my experience as graduate director in my unit, I note that graduate students at UMD are currently paid from a variety of sources, and students across departments have expressed frustration about not being able to receive pay on a timely and regular basis. Collective bargaining is one of the main ways that workers can advocate for simple measures that would standardize pay, ensure adequate benefits, protect against employment discrimination, and improve the ability of workers to focus on their jobs. There are many other reasons that workers need this fundamental right of association to be recognized by the state, but I hope that my brief comments give a sense of the urgency of establishing collective bargaining in order to improve the university and promote well-being among workers across the state.

Sincerely,
Neel Ahuja

noemi.glaeser.pdf

Uploaded by: Noemi Glaeser

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Noemi Glaeser, Graduate Student
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

graduate students are in all effects employees of the university and greatly contribute to its operation. Despite this, we are compensated significantly less compared to graduate students at other universities, and in fact the compensation barely keeps up with the high cost of living of the area. How can universities in Maryland expect to compete with those in other states by attracting strong students if they offer far worse financial conditions? Collective bargaining is one of the best avenues students could have to share their concerns, and it is a right students in many other states have. Maryland is an outlier by denying its graduate assistants this right.

Sincerely,
Noemi Glaeser
Graduate Student
Department of Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
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pamela.feldersmall.pdf

Uploaded by: Pamela Felder-Small

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Pamela Felder-Small

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Pamela Felder-Small and I am Alumna and Former Faculty member, Associate Professor, of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, where I have worked for three years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

At this time my testimony is from the perspective of a former faculty member. I will state that this bill is critically important to support the work of faculty in ways that strengthen our state institutions and the United States.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

prabhat.janamanchi.pdf

Uploaded by: Prabhat Janamanchi

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Prabhat Janamanchi, Research Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

The cost of living in College Park has risen quite significantly since I started grad school in 2018 and the salary increases provided by the university haven't quite matched that at all. It was barely enough to get by before when I just had to support myself, but now that I'm married it doesn't help at all and it's pretty much impossible for me to even consider supporting a child or daycare expenses. I think this needs to be reconsidered for a university that prides itself as being 'research focused'. Financial stress on top of doing a PhD is not feasible for long-term well being. I hope this brings some positive change to our lives.

Sincerely,
Prabhat Janamanchi
Research Assistant
Mechanical Engineering
University of Maryland, College Park
3103 Martin Hall, Campus Dr, College Park, MD 20742
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rebecca.quon.pdf

Uploaded by: Rebecca Quon

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Rebecca Quon, former Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

Dear Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Members of the Finance Committee,

My name is Rebecca Quon and I am a member of the University of Maryland, College Park community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275, granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants within the University System of Maryland.

This issue matters to me personally because as a former Graduate Assistant at UMD and a member of the campus's alumni community, I have deep firsthand knowledge of the importance of the work that graduate assistants do in conducting campus activities from teaching to research and campus administration. In the six years since I graduated, assistantship stipends have hardly increased, and have certainly not kept pace with cost of living increases in that time. It was difficult to make ends then, on \$23,000 per year, and must be even more difficult now. Without collective bargaining rights, graduate assistants do not have adequate means to address issues with their working conditions. I appreciate your consideration of these issues.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Quon
former Graduate Assistant
University of Maryland, College Park
4382 11th Street , Riverside, CA 92501
rquon01@gmail.com

robert.j.benedict.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert J. Benedict

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Albert Nekimken

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Robert Bennett, MA and I am a part-time professor at UMBC and CCBC, where I have worked for 10 and 14 years consecutively. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. Clearly this right should extend to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As an adjunct I teach between 5-7 classes a semester to make ends barely meet (this is more than most full-time professors teach per semester). I teach Technical Communications at UBC and Fundamentals of Communication at CCBC. I have also taught graphic design/visual arts courses at UMBC, College of Notre Dame of Maryland, MICA and Anne Arundel County Community College. Beyond the hours in the classroom, I spend 40+ hours grading work from over 100 students on average per semester. Additionally at UMBC I am a campus leader. I chair or co-chair three committees; most of this work is unpaid.

I urge you to support this bill because the system is broken and many faculty, particularly long-term adjuncts, are truly being exploited by their institutions. For example, the highest paid adjuncts at CCBC make \$1000 per credit hour (a dramatic \$20 increase from the previous tier) while a full-time assistant professor makes, with the same amount of service, about \$2666 per credit hour. While UMBC pays better, both schools limit adjuncts access to benefits or make them overly costly or difficult to obtain (no payroll deduction). Collective bargaining creates equity across the board and allows underpaid faculty to have a living wage and access to benefits; what should be a human right.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

robyn.muncy.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Muncy

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Robyn Muncy, Professor of History at the University of Maryland, College Park

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Robyn Muncy, and I am a professor of history at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for nearly 33 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants the right of collective bargaining to nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our four-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I am very fortunate to teach and research twentieth-century United States history, especially women's history, the history of social movements, and social policy. In a typical year, I teach two courses in twentieth-century U.S. history each semester, supervise the research of five graduate students, and participate in the governance of my department, college, and university. In addition, of course, I pursue my own research and participate in the life of the historical profession.

I love my research and teaching more than I can adequately express, but the conditions of my work have changed dramatically during the last 30+ years and not always for the better. Indeed, I am alarmed by the increasing administrative burden imposed by the university on all faculty, which competes with teaching and research for faculty time and bandwidth. More hours every year must be spent learning the latest digital reporting system or newest teaching technology and reformatting documents to match the needs of the university's latest (and usually cheaper?) technologies. Most of the university's reporting requirements assume the scholarly forms and research protocols of the sciences into which humanities scholars and teachers must somehow squeeze representations of their very different sort of work. This is outrageously time-consuming and, frankly, demoralizing. Moreover, the university administration has in the last year made unilateral decisions about health protocols that, in my view, have unnecessarily risked the well-being of faculty, students, and staff. Every constituency should have had a say in these decisions.

Another worrying trend at UMD is an increasing reliance on non-tenure-track faculty for teaching undergraduates. As you know, the erosion of tenure diminishes the power of faculty in any institution, and the conditions shaping the lives of non-tenure-track faculty are often abhorrent.

They are abhorrent not only to the well-being of individual faculty members who must teach such heavy loads that they often have to choose between their health and continuing their own research but also to the education of our undergraduates. Faculty who do not know from one semester to the next what or even whether they will be teaching and who carry untenable course loads in order to make ends meet, cannot possibly be as well prepared for their classes as they would like to be. Moreover, because they sometimes have to teach at multiple institutions to pay their bills, they cannot be as available to students as they would be if they were securely employed at one institution. The precarity of their lives shapes the educational opportunity of their students. As the dedicated teachers in the American Federation of Teachers always say, teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions.

Faculty at every level know what it takes to deliver the best education and most innovative research possible, which is why we need the democratic voice in university life that collective bargaining will grant us. With collective bargaining rights, faculty will be able to improve the conditions under which ALL faculty labor and redirect the trajectory away from an increasingly precarious professoriate.

Faculty at the University of Maryland need collective bargaining rights so that we can keep teaching our wonderful and richly deserving students at the highest level possible and producing cutting-edge scholarship. We need power to shape our workplace so that teaching and scholarship—rather than fears for our health or how we are going to learn the latest utterly nonsensical technology for graduate admissions—remain the center of our focus.

I ask you to support SB 247. Collective bargaining democratizes workplaces, and in this historical moment when democracy is under threat in crucial quarters, we need to demonstrate our commitment to it in every arena of our life together. Maryland has for decades shown that collective bargaining is good for state employees and for state institutions. Many other public institutions of higher education across the country grant collective bargaining rights to faculty as do many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. It is hard to figure out why this fundamental human right is still denied the faculty at Maryland's four-year public colleges and universities. I look forward to your favorable report on SB 247.

ryan.conrath.pdf

Uploaded by: Ryan Conrath

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Ryan Conrath, Associate Professor of English, Salisbury University

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Ryan Conrath and I am Associate Professor of English at Salisbury University, where I have worked for 5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach an average of five classes a year at Salisbury University. In addition, I co-edit a journal of adaptation studies housed at SU, chair a committee for faculty professional development funds, and am very engaged in the culture and politics on campus. There's much that I appreciate about working here at SU, but I have encountered issues over the past several years that, on reflection, I know could be addressed through *truly* shared governance, which we simply do not have at our institution. Recently there have been sweeping changes that affect how classes will be categorized under the new general education model. The administration has communicated the urgent expectation that we revise the syllabi for our classes to conform to the new model, which involves a ton of work for each class. For all of this extra work revising syllabi and submitting extensive proposals, there has been no offer of remuneration, and very little transparency as to HOW the many committees and bureaucratic actors evaluate these proposals. This situation reflects much of how things operate at SU between the university leadership and faculty/staff. As another, slightly different example, it was recently announced that we would see a 5% raise due to COLA adjustments, which was supposed to take effect in November of 2022. However, we didn't see the adjustments to our pay until mid-January 2023. I tried to contact Human Resources on multiple occasions and never received a response. I offer these two examples as reflections of a much larger need for truly *shared* governance. At the moment, we only have the "Faculty Senate," which is essentially a large body of my peers beset by bureaucratic bloat with no actual power.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

sabrina.baron.pdf

Uploaded by: Sabrina Baron

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Sabrina Baron, Senior Lecturer**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. For 20 years I have been a contingent faculty member at the University of Maryland, College Park. For 18 years of that time, I did not receive a raise in wages except for cost-of-living increases when those were available. I was paid on a per course basis on contracts that ran semester-to-semester. I did not receive full benefits nor did I receive any fringe benefits. I taught the same course load, and often a heavier load, as tenure track faculty in my department taught for about 1/3 of the compensation they receive, and was classified as part time. My annual wages were \$20,000-25,000 in an area where that amount does not constitute a living wage. I am part of the almost 70% of UMCP faculty who are employed under these terms.

I have worked on USM campuses and other schools in the DC area for many years to try and improve these working conditions. Contingent faculty now comprise such a large proportion of university faculty here and nationwide that the time for ending exploitative employment practices is more than past due.

USM, like most colleges and universities, clearly do not believe in social justice or equitable wages and working conditions for their employees. Negotiations and protests to appeal to any sense of fairness or fellow feeling have repeatedly failed and been treated with disdain.

It is more than clear that USM, like other colleges and universities, have no intention of improving the situation of their employees until and unless they are compelled to do so by a higher mandate. You, the legislators of the state of Maryland, have the power and ability to provide that mandate.

We ask that you support the passage of this bill which would allow USM employees including graduate assistants, to bargain collectively for better wages and benefits.

Those of us, your constituents, who are educating our future leaders, are doing so while living at the poverty level or below. It is time for our vital contribution to higher education to be recognized and adequately compensated.

Thank you for your support of this vital legislation.

Respectfully submitted,
Sabrina Alcorn Baron, PhD

sbaron812@gmail.com

samuel.dibella.pdf

Uploaded by: Samuel DiBella

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Samuel DiBella, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

"Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Samuel DiBella and I am a member of the University of Maryland, College Park, community. I am writing to express my strong support for SB247/HB275 (State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants), granting collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants at an institution within the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.

This issue matters to me personally because, as a representative of the College of Information Studies in UMD's meet-and-confer process, I have seen how broken our institution's system of shared governance is. While graduate assistants survive on food stamps, or drop out due to low wages, the university administration refuses to consider our requests for their help in good faith. We are tired of contributing what little energy we have outside of our insecure, precarious jobs at the university to yet another advisory process that is designed to ignore our views.

I myself have been forced to teach an adjunct instructor of record how to teach, because he was assigned to a course two weeks before the semester and provided no curriculum support?this is not how an institution of higher-learning should conduct itself, and the education that we provide to our undergrad students will only suffer due to the turnover of instructors and increased course load every teaching assistant is being asked to support.

I'm tired of my friends having to muddle through this institution with second or third jobs; I am tired of them being on food stamps; I am tired of listening to bad-faith justifications for the USM's exploitative practices. We are coming to you because we need your help to restore accountability and workplace democracy to some of Maryland's largest public institutions.

Sincerely,
Samuel DiBella
Graduate Assistant
Information Studies
University of Maryland, College Park
Hornbake 4105, 4130 Campus Drive, College Park, Maryland 20740
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sarah.fouts.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Fouts

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Dr. Sarah Fouts, Assistant Professor**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Sarah Fouts and I am an assistant professor in the Department of American Studies at UMBC where I have worked for 4.5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247 to grant collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate students.

Passing SB 247 will improve faculty retention. This bill will improve wages, better benefits, and create safer workplaces. It will have a positive impact on retaining faculty which is an issue that we face at UMBC. This bill will also help protect the rights of contingent faculty which is integral to ensuring job security and fostering more equitable access to resources. Collective bargaining is the best way to get job security.

The bill will ensure that we all have a seat at the table and a voice in setting the terms and conditions of our employment. Collective bargaining increases communication between faculty and administrators and increases transparency within the institution by allowing for more democratic negotiation and decision-making processes. Doing so will also provide clearer channels and mechanisms for the fair resolution of workplace disputes.

The bill will also improve the educational environment for students by allowing faculty to set limits on class size, address school health and safety issues, and give faculty more input in their professional development. These steps all foster a thriving student-centered environment.

The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. This right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

shadi.seyedi.khabbaz.pdf

Uploaded by: Shadi Seyedi khabbaz

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Shadi Seyedi khabbaz, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I would like to share my struggles as a student in the current economic climate with inflation and the rising cost of living. Finding affordable housing and adjusting my expenses have been a significant challenge. There were times when I even considered dropping out and seeking employment to cover my expenses. However, the challenges are even greater for international students who come to the US on a student visa (F-1) with dependents, as their spouse is not permitted to work. The stipend is barely enough to support a single person, let alone a family, and the lack of collective bargaining makes it almost impossible to negotiate for a raise.

In addition to financial difficulties, I have also heard many accounts of mistreatment and harassment from my friends in the academic community. Some have been forced to work overtime and on weekends, and others have experienced threats of work termination and intimidation, but they have no platform to make their voices heard. I believe that with unionization, they will finally have a voice in the university system, which too often ignores the needs of the instructors, researchers, and administrators who make it all possible.

Sincerely,
Shadi Seyedi khabbaz
Graduate Assistant
Public Policy
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
PUP Bldg, 4th Floor University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle, Baltimore,
MD 21250
sseyedi1@umbc.edu

siv.lie.pdf

Uploaded by: Siv Lie

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Siv B. Lie, Assistant Professor of Music, University of Maryland (College Park)
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Siv B. Lie and I am an Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 5.5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

My primary appointment is in the Division of Musicology and Ethnomusicology in the School of Music, and I have affiliate appointments in the Department of Anthropology; the Center for Global Migration Studies; the School of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies; and the Consortium on Race, Gender, and Ethnicity. Since I began working at UMD, I have taught two courses per semester, in addition to continuous advising of my division's graduate students. To date, I have instructed a total of nearly 900 undergraduate and graduate students. I also engage in a large number of service activities, such as serving on a variety of committees, to ensure that my division and unit can continue to function. A central feature of my job is research, which includes time spent conducting ethnographic fieldwork, publishing, giving conference papers and invited talks, developing public-facing media, and collaborating with community partners, among other activities. My research centers on issues of race and social justice, which my university explicitly prioritizes in its Strategic Plan.

I support this bill because I know I am not alone as an overworked faculty member with little meaningful say in how my institution is governed. This bill is a crucial step in bringing democracy and transparent negotiation to my workplace. Without the passage of this bill, faculty are extremely constrained in their avenues to advocate for fair working conditions. For example, the level of service and advising I have to do is unusually high for an untenured faculty member like myself, but my division is understaffed in its tenure-track lines, so each of us must shoulder much more than our job descriptions call for. Due to this heavy workload during the school year, I am only able to pursue the majority of the research that is required of this position during winter and summer breaks, even though I am on a 10-month contract. What's more, I am among the lowest-paid tenure-track faculty in the entire College of Arts and Humanities, which is already one of the lowest-paying colleges on my campus. Through the collective bargaining that this bill would enable, faculty like myself would finally have the opportunity to remedy the considerable workload and pay imbalances we are facing. This bill would also empower

non-tenure-track faculty and graduate assistants, who face far more precarious situations than tenure-track faculty, to ensure that they too can negotiate for the stable, humane working conditions and livable wages they deserve.

Members of the committee, now is the time to join other states in guaranteeing the basic democratic right of collective bargaining to all employees in public higher education. We are simply asking for the ability to do the jobs our employer hired us to do under fair working conditions. Research has made clear that collective bargaining is an important tool in strengthening relationships between university administration, faculty, and students, and that it helps ensure equity of many types. If our university system is to live up to its claims to support social justice and remain one of the best public institutions for higher education in this country, it is imperative that its workers gain the right to collectively bargain. Therefore, I again call for a favorable report to SB 247.

susannah.bf.paletz.pdf

Uploaded by: Susannah B.F. Paletz

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Susannah Paletz, Associate Professor
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Susannah Paletz, and I am an Associate Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 9 years as both a tenured professor and a professional track professor and research scientist. **I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247.** The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I received my doctorate in 2003 and have had a variety of positions in government, at university research centers, and now at the College of Information Studies. Through a series of fortunate events, I became a tenured associate professor in 2021 after being an untenured, professional track research professor. While tenured faculty have enviable job stability—as I personally well know—there are difficulties, inequities, and precariousness in academia at all levels. Personally, I currently teach 309 students, albeit with support from graduate teaching assistants, undergraduate teaching assistants, and graders. As our majors have become more popular and grown, so have our classes. This growth is a good thing for the financial health of our College and University, and for the training and education of our students. But, it also highlights some of the weaknesses of the system. I have an intense workload:

- I teach, which for two courses is considered by the university to take 40% of a 40-hour work week. However, this is an underestimate even for courses I have previously prepared (lectures, assignments). Teaching includes organizing, teaching, mentoring, and leading my instructional team; answering student emails (this week alone I received well over a dozen about getting off the waitlist and many about unexcused absences); preparing lectures and section activities; creating assignments and exams, relevant rubrics for grading them, and instruction/prep materials for students; grading and calibrating grading for my instructional team; and more. As an example, for each new 50-minute lecture, it typically takes me 5-8 hours to research the topic, prepare what I will say, find and assess appropriate images/figures, and create slides. Speaking with colleagues, this is typical.
- One of the essential tasks of University tenured/tenure-track, and research professional track faculty is conducting research. I lead complex multidisciplinary research projects without project management support. Also, of vital importance to people in our roles, I attempt to publish in journals, submit papers for conferences, write book chapters, and

so on. Many of these end in rejection, and unlike with how most people consider publications, journals do not pay us to publish—and some charge us fees (roughly 3-30 hours a week depending on how many projects and my other workload, and of course higher in summers/winter break).

- I apply for and write grant proposals, which typically takes 30-50 hours for a brief white paper proposal and 80-120 for a full proposal where I am to be a principal investigator, not including my co-investigators/writers' efforts.
- As with all faculty, I also do “service,” which includes: mentoring colleagues and students (undergraduate and graduate), including serving on or chairing thesis and dissertation committees, speaking with students, and writing letters of recommendation; attending faculty meetings such as appointment, promotion, and tenure meetings; directing/organizing a research interest group and soliciting/organizing speakers for it; doing required training and reporting for the university; and engaging in committee work which ranges from developing curricula to evaluating other faculty, among other tasks. This work can also take from 2-20 hours a week, depending on the week.

I love my job, and my colleagues are wonderful to work with; each of these tasks individually is a joy. However, as someone who has studied, taught, and practiced organizational psychology and management, and who has worked outside of academia, the sheer number of tasks and constant task switching are overwhelming. Recently, a series of health issues striking our family, including me, has made me notice that although we have sick time, faculty do not have ‘backfill’ in the way other jobs do, and so can only take sick time effectively during school breaks unless incapacitated. If I were in a car accident, my similarly overworked colleagues would band together to try to take over my classes, but as I am merely limping along (metaphorically) post-surgery, then it is best if I simply continue trying to meet all my obligations in a degraded state that hurts my recovery. When my husband recently was ill at the start of the semester, I could not take time off to care for him. My schedule was flexible, but it meant 18-hour days between chores, family care, and my job while still recovering from my own health crisis. That workload does not include those tasks I was able to put aside for later or opportunities I simply lost. In any other job, I could have taken sick time effectively to care for myself and my family.

Even more concerningly, I have a specific physical vulnerability to COVID, and the university decided without conferring with the staff or faculty (via the faculty senate or not) to simply lift the mask mandate, rather than changing it depending on the current COVID rates or allowing faculty control over their individual classes. This decision prompted me to seek a reasonable accommodation (which I received) to teach online, but my doctor made it clear: if masking were mandated, I could return to in-person teaching, which I, and I suspect, my students, would prefer. While my particular College has been supportive and understanding, they are limited by what is allowed at the University level.

By being unable to collectively bargain, I and other faculty have not been able to make our voices heard when it comes to matters of public health and workload. This point is even more worrisome given that the University of Maryland College Park has national experts on public health and misinformation. The issues of workload I noted are not specific to me but are

systematic. And while I am writing about myself, I have been non-tenured for most of my career, and I have observed the toll that the current system takes not only on professional track faculty, but on graduate students and staff, as well as student learning.

Members of the committee, the right to collective bargaining has been a fundamental human right, and in this state in other domains has been seen as an excellent method for ensuring employee voices play a role in our workplaces. Enacting this bill is in line with democratic values and that of free speech. Other public higher education institutions in this country have this right. **I again therefore request a favorable report to SB 247.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

sydney.i.sharpstene.pdf

Uploaded by: Sydney I Sharpstene

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Sydney Sharpstene, Full Time Lecturer
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Sydney Sharpstene and I am a Full-Time Lecturer at The University of Maryland. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

I teach a 4-4 schedule (4 classes each semester), but can still barely make ends meet for my family. I rely on teaching in the summer to make ends meet and also have a second job. The average salary of members of Strategic Planning Committee was over \$300,000 last year, yet my salary is \$52,400; why? And why are faculty members not valued for their feedback in committees? In the 16-member search committee for new Dean of Graduate School, includes two faculty members and two students.

I love working here, but conditions are often precarious. Contracts can be given at the last minute, leaving little to no time for preparation. I personally did not have access to the required materials yet on my first day of teaching because I had only been hired for a week. I also did not get to complete new faculty orientation because I was hired too late in the summer.

There are 3,392 full-time PTK faculty at UMD, and many of us in the PTK program can't make ends meet. For instructional PTK like me, a full-time course load is 4-4, double what tenure-track faculty teach. Instructional faculty can earn as little as \$5,000 for a course, roughly what I receive. Many part-time faculty work at a number of different campuses, or multiple jobs just to make ends meet.

Even worse is that PTK faculty do not speak out about work conditions because they fear losing their job. As a result, we lack input from the people teaching most of the credit hours (around 70%) on our campus. Many faculty members lack the resources to serve students: offices and computers; funds for professional development; the ability to buy books. In our department, we don't even have a fully staffed writing center due to budget constraints. I have several students who would like to visit the center, but it is always booked with appointments, and it is next to impossible to get one that isn't a month out. I would love for my voice (and the voice of my colleagues to be heard on this, but no one listens to us.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year

public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247. Thank you for your time.

Sydney Sharpstene

thomas.zeller.pdf

Uploaded by: Thomas Zeller

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Thomas Zeller, Associate Professor, University of Maryland, College Park

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Thomas Zeller and I am an associate professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for almost 22 years. I am a resident of Greenbelt, MD, and call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

Graduate students and non-permanent faculty (called “professional track faculty” on our campus) need to be able to unionize in order to improve their working conditions. Instructors and students will benefit from these changes.

Graduate assistants are afraid of speaking up because of their uncertain status. Between 20 and 36 percent of graduate assistants work more than the stipulated 20 hours, which slows down their progress. Their stipends are low and often below the cost of living. Low stipend levels disproportionately affect historically underserved groups.

On the College Park campus, there are 3,392 professional-track faculty. They teach most of the credit hours on campus. However, their status is precarious. Contracts can be given or withdrawn at the last minute, and even instructors who have taught for more than a decade can be fired without a reason given. Their pay is often low.

Regarding tenured and tenure-track faculty, their number has fallen by 6.9% between 2014 and 2022, while the number of non-tenure track faculty has risen by 19.3% during the same period.

Given these inequities, it is important that collective bargaining will be allowed on our campus. It would improve working conditions for the most vulnerable instructional faculty on our campus and provide better instruction for our students. Additionally, it would help faculty to attract the best graduate students, who often choose unionized campuses because working conditions there are better.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Respectfully yours,

Thomas Zeller

116 Julian Ct

Greenbelt MD 20770

timothy.kumfer.pdf

Uploaded by: Timothy Kumfer

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Timothy Kumfer, Graduate Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

This issue matters to me personally because strong working conditions for teachers have been shown consistently to be the foundation for successful student learning outcomes. The basis for strong working conditions, in turn, is the right to collective bargaining—a democratic right which has been denied to faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants within the University System of Maryland and related educational institutions within the state for far too long. This session of the General Assembly provides an unparalleled opportunity to rectify this wrong and I urge your Committee to begin taking the necessary steps to do so immediately.

Graduate assistants are the backbone of the research university, performing a significant amount of the instructional and administrative work that enables tenured and tenure track faculty to dedicate themselves to producing original research. The University of Maryland - College Park is no exception to this rule, with graduate assistants often working far in excess of the contract-stipulated 20 hours per week. In many departments, mine included, we are often sole instructors of record, teaching undergraduate courses in lieu of professors. The process of receiving these teaching assignments, including not only which courses one is assigned but also the times at which instruction is offered, lacks transparency. Further, graduate assistants typically receive little oversight, direction, or support when providing undergraduate instruction. The meet-and-confer process in place since 2010 has done little to substantively address these issues, which are long-term, systemic in nature, and widely experienced across departments.

Despite residing in one of the most expensive metropolitan regions in the country, the stipends for UMD graduate assistants remain among the lowest in the Big Ten. With an annualized salary stipend of \$22,000.34 for the academic year 2021-2022, I, like many others, have had to take on additional outside employment to cover my living expenses without incurring tens of thousands in dollars in student debt. The need to juggle multiple jobs at once inevitably affects the quality of instruction graduate assistants are able to provide to undergraduates while also pushing back their own time to degree. UMD, like other universities, touts its commitment to creating a diverse pipeline of scholars that better represents current student populations and can meet the needs of an increasingly multicultural society. Abysmally low stipends inhibit this stated goal, reproducing the assumption that the academy is an occupation reserved for the privileged few.

The challenges facing higher education in Maryland and throughout the country are immense. Collective bargaining for faculty, part-time faculty, and graduate assistants will not solve all of these problems. It is, however, a critical step in the path towards their resolution?one which you have the power to make happen. I urge you to do so now by working to ensure the swift passage of SB247/HB275.

Sincerely,
Timothy Kumfer
Graduate Assistant
ARHU
University of Maryland, College Park
1348 Euclid St NW, Washington, DC 20009
tdkumfer@gmail.com

Kelleher Testimony CBSB247_2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Tina Kelleher

Position: FAV

TESTIMONY OF TINA M. KELLEHER, PHD
BEFORE THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE MARYLAND SENATE

For a hearing on

SENATE BILL 247: "STATE PERSONNEL –COLLECTIVE BARGAINING – Faculty-Part-Time Faculty
and Graduate Assistants"

FAVORABLE

FEBRUARY 13, 2023

Chairperson Griffiths, Vice Chairperson Klausmeir and distinguished members of the Finance Committee:

My name is Dr. Tina M. Kelleher and I have served in a range of roles for more than twenty-two years as contingent faculty at Towson University: I currently serve as a lecturer or Full-Time Non-Tenure Track (FTNTT) faculty in the Department of Computer and Information Sciences teaching ethics and areas tied to human-computer interactive design; I also have taught interdisciplinary courses for English, the Honors College, as well as Women and Gender Studies.

Eleven years ago, in 2012, I submitted testimony hoping to pass HB 972 "The Higher Education Workforce Equity Act" (included as an appendix at end for reference). The legislation was not allowed to move out of committee and the outcome was a ["Meet and Confer"](#) document on the Provost Office website never taken seriously by administrators on my or any of the USM campuses. I have experienced the consequences of imagining "Meet and Confer" or "Meet and Confer," could serve as a meaningful remedy for the festering challenges. To bring Maryland public higher education institutions to the next level of 21st century learning and research on our respective campuses, we need equal and transparent access to information that could facilitate regular, clear communication that truthfully represents the interests of the parties involved.

When the global pandemic hit in 2020, lecturers on my campus had no payroll-deduction access to subsidized health care and we had no sick leave, which compounded the stresses. Further, Towson created a confusing classificatory system tied to lecturers, who work 4/4 loads no matter the nomenclature determining payroll-deduction access to benefits: we now have "temporary contingent lecturers" (no access), "regular contingent lecturers" ("opting-in"), and "contingent lecturers" ("opting-out"). Department Chairs were left out of these email

communications, which undermined good-willed colleagues and staff, as workloads precipitously surged amid the crises.

Last May a [new “promotion policy” for lecturers](#) surfaced on the Senate without notifying our faculty rank or our tenure-track colleagues; presumably, it was up to Chairs to inform those qualified to apply, even as recent other changes left them out of communication loops. The policy identifies additional Senior ranks of Lecturer II and III; however, if someone already qualified for the latter status, they inexplicably could not apply for that raise level. I work the same job, but my title changed several times in as many years. The promotion ladder was designed to delay progress, not to support it meaningfully.

There is a bottom line when it comes to this bill; regardless of our job titles: **WE ARE ALL CONTINGENT.**

The USM frames collective bargaining through a glass darkly. But the glass in this case is neither half full nor half empty; it’s cracked and warping. I urge ending these “Meet and Observe” practices: Maryland faculty, graduate employees, librarians and academic professionals have already waited too long and deserve better, as do the hundreds of thousands of students that they teach, support and advise.

APPENDIX

TESTIMONY OF TINA M. KELLEHER, PHD

BEFORE THE

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

For a hearing on

HOUSE BILL 972: "THE HIGHER EDUCATION WORKFORCE EQUITY ACT"

MARCH 6, 2012

Chairperson Conway, Vice Chairperson Proctor, Jr. and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Dr. Tina Kelleher and I have served for six years as Full-Time Non-Tenure Track faculty in the Department of English and the Honors College at Towson University in Towson, Maryland; I prior to this served for several years as part-time adjunct faculty in the Department of Women's Studies. In October, 2010, I was elected by my full-time non-tenure track colleagues (consisting of approximately 171 full-time Lecturers and around 55 Clinical Faculty or about 25% of Towson's full-time faculty) to our University Senate and am the first and only contingent faculty representative to have the privilege and responsibility to serve on this body at my institution. As someone who experiences firsthand the precarious working circumstances and the ongoing professional issues concerning my tier of faculty, I urge this body to pass House Bill 972, the Higher Education Workforce Equity Act.

Full-time Non-tenure Track Lecturers (FTNTT's) at Towson University typically hold a 4/4 teaching load with a base pay of around \$34K per academic year (and \$36K if they hold a PhD). As is the case with all Lecturers who serve in the University System "pin" institutions, our access to health care benefits is limited and subject to bureaucratic processes that jeopardize coverage month-to-month. For instance, on a monthly basis we submit by mail coupon subsidies to the Maryland Department of Budget and Management; if we miss the deadline for submission during any given month, we lose our benefits for the remainder of the academic year. FTNTT's do not have an automatic payroll deduction option or a tax exemption for the minimal medical benefits they do qualify to receive. The right to bargain collectively could encourage more consistency about the terms upon which we are able to access and process benefit options.

Lecturers currently have no subsidized prescription drug coverage; we also receive no subsidized health coverage for dependents – these are benefits otherwise available to all full-time staff at our university and all full-time tenure-line faculty. FTNTT's who work at other non-pin institutions in the University System do in fact receive these benefits, often on a lighter teaching load of 4/3, and at a higher base

starting pay (e.g., two years back an adjunct from my department accepted a Lecturer position at UMBC with a starting base pay of \$40K, a 4/3 load, and all benefits, teaching the same exact courses she does at Towson University). On April 13th, 2007, The Baltimore Sun, published an article by Gadi Dechter titled "UM Regents Approve Health Care for Lecturers," which erroneously suggested that all Lecturers in the University System pin institutions would have more comprehensive coverage soon. However, as of March, 2012, we still await access to benefits nearly all other full-time employees receive at the university. The Board of Regents and the University System Chancellor has been aware of this issue for a half decade now. While Lecturers do appreciate the expressions of empathy and good will from campus administrators, this does not at all change the fact that nothing has yet been done to budget accordingly for these necessary (and promised) health benefit options. I and many other Lecturers believe that the right to bargain collectively could make a difference to obtaining follow through on benefits that from year-to-year never in fact materialize for our tier of faculty.

The University President Council at Towson implemented on December 1st, 2011, a Policy on the Employment of Lecturers designed to recommend some basic guidelines to improve our overall professional status. While this marks an important start towards establishing some rights for Lecturers on this campus, it emerged as a consequence of troubling circumstances that would be unimaginable to full-time tenure-line faculty. For example, a PhD Lecturer with twelve years of service received a notice indicating he had to generate two peer-reviewed journal articles within 90-days or his contract would be non-renewed, because of a new accreditation requirement that was never in fact shared with faculty of his rank (but was construed to be applicable to all full-time PhD faculty, regardless of whether or not they received the professional development or material supports of the tenure-track). The requirement did not apply to his non-PhD Lecturer colleagues (though having the same workload and making roughly the same amount of money). The Lecturer lost his job and had no means to contest the decision. Other Lecturers have received non-renewal notices, and in spite of their positive record of teaching and service, their Chair indicated the USM requires no procedure of justification for such decision-making when it comes to this tier of faculty. My further research has revealed this to be true. The University President's office informed me last month that a Chair can non-renew a Lecturer if he or she dislikes the color purple and a Lecturer happens to wear it -- regardless of length and quality of service to the university and regardless of what the President's Council's well-intentioned new policy states. The right to bargain collectively could at the very least remind campus administrators about their responsibility to exercise professionalism towards faculty of all ranks, to support faculty (be they tenure-line or contingent) in their efforts to provide a quality education to each and every student that enters our respective classrooms.

The Lecturer policy recently implemented on my campus also contains a variety of other serious inconsistencies. For instance, it requires an annual review of professional performance for the purposes of "merit" consideration (when monies are available). However, it denies Lecturers the right to apply for promotion to the rank of "Senior Lecturer" after 6-years of service, even though the USM allows for the use of this rank on the respective USM campuses. Lecturers are the only tier of faculty in the university who undergo processes of annual review with no possibility of promotion (including part-time adjuncts, who as of this past year, have Adjunct I and Adjunct II designations based on a range of evaluative

criteria). Towson University does in fact employ Senior Lecturers but it is my understanding they were appointed prior to 2005; unlike other Lecturers in the university, they receive a full health care benefits package with deductions taken from their paychecks. All other Lecturers -- regardless of length of service, regardless of qualifications, regardless of excellence in teaching and service -- have no pathway to the comprehensive benefits granted to all other full-time faculty and staff, and indeed, Senior Lecturers, who now exist at a rank suppressed on my campus because of a past precedent (during headier financial times) linking that rank to full health care benefits. The right to bargain collectively could encourage more honesty and transparency about the how and why of such promotion and rank matters for the FTNTT's on my campus.

Finally, the USM stipulates that all Lecturers are entitled to shared governance participation in matters "relevant to them"; however, there's no means to systematically enforce this right at the department or division level. The right to bargain collectively could ensure that university administrators and tenured faculty take more seriously the importance of Lecturer participation in shared governance practices and that we mutually support each other as collegial, higher education professionals.

I urge you to vote for this bill and allow faculty at all and any rank to choose whether or not they want to use collective bargaining to improve their working conditions. You will be demonstrating your commitment to higher education as a public good and acknowledging that employees and employers together know best how to continue developing the institutions that expand and communicate knowledge for the benefit of the entire community.

I thank you for considering my thoughts on these very important issues and enthusiastically reaffirm my endorsement of this bill.

tita.chico.pdf

Uploaded by: Tita Chico

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Tita Chico, Professor, University of Maryland, College Park
SB 247**

**State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Tita Chico and I am a Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 18 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

We need collective bargaining in the University of Maryland System to help improve the state of Maryland's institutions of higher education and the quality of instruction and research that we faculty and our graduate assistants can provide.

With enrollments increasing and the number of tenure track faculty decreasing (by 7%)--alongside a huge growth in the number of administrators (over 40%) since 2015 and a big increase in the number of *non* tenure-track faculty being hired (by 19%)--the daily work of advising our students, developing courses and majors, researching at the highest levels, securing external grants to support research, and running all aspects of our departments and colleges has become untenable for tenure-track faculty. In my department alone, the number of tenure-track faculty has declined by 20% in the last several years, while the workload of the department continues to increase. We are being required to do more and more with less and less. We tenure-track faculty are stretched to the limit.

The university administration continues to operate in a bubble and needs help understanding and recognizing that the people who do the vast majority of the work on campus are overworked and underpaid. Enacting SB 247 would ensure that all stakeholders on campus work together to build a strong, healthy, and competitive institution.

A robust university needs input from everyone, not just the highly-paid few who are disconnected from the realities of our students and the work of higher education today. Public Universities with collective bargaining (e.g., Rutgers) are better run fiscally and have higher national rankings. Collective bargaining will help the USM to move forward to a prosperous future.

For these reasons, I call for a favorable report to SB 247.

Thank you.

SB 247. AFT. HigherEdCollective Bargaining.pdf

Uploaded by: Todd Reynolds

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining –
Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023
SUPPORT**

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. AFT-Maryland is the state federation for a number of public K-12 education, public higher education, and public employee unions in our state, representing over 20,000 employees in the Baltimore Teachers Union, the Maryland Classified Employees Association, the Maryland Professional Employees Council, and AFT Healthcare-Maryland. On behalf of these workers, we call for a favorable report to SB 247, the bill that would lift the unfair exemption to collective bargaining rights to our public university's academic workforce.

For decades, Maryland has recognized collective bargaining as an effective vehicle for public employees to engage in meaningful, good faith conversations with state administrators and management on working conditions that govern their employment. In 2000, the legislature extended this right to the non-academic workers at the state's public 4 year institutions. And in 2021, the state extended this right to the non academic and the academic workforce at the state's community colleges. Additionally, under the presidency of Joe Biden, these rights have been extended by the National Labor Relations Board to academic workers at private institutions, including Johns Hopkins in Baltimore, where graduate assistants voted by 97% to engage in collective bargaining. It just no longer makes sense to exclude academic workers at our state's 4 year institutions from a fundamental human right enjoyed by so many others in our state.

Contrary to what administration officials have argued in the past regarding collective bargaining for graduate assistants, having a union relationship on the campus helps, not hinders, a graduate student's own academic progress. Placing an objective, collectively negotiated standards for a graduate employees work for the university, whether that is in a teaching or research capacity has, as studies have shown, made the expectations between a graduate assistant and her or his supervisor much clearer. Furthermore, there are many graduate assistants whose academic work plays no role in their academic progress. For example, it is

possible for a graduate student to complete her or his degree without ever becoming a graduate assistant. Likewise, for a graduate student in, say, English or Political Science, may have an assistantship teaching a course which has nothing to do with their own academic work, or working as an administrative assistant managing an office and answering phones. Assistantships like this are quite common across the University System of Maryland.

Nine of the schools of the Big 10, of which the University of Maryland is a part, allow for collective bargaining for their graduate assistants, and many of those institutions also allow for their faculty to engage in collective bargaining if they so choose. Additionally, numerous states in our region, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Delaware allow for collective bargaining for the academic workforce at their public 4 year institutions.

The measures the university administration has in place for academic workers to express and attempt to resolve workplace concerns just is not working. Whether it be through the meet-and-confer process— in which the graduate assistants and adjunct faculty have been testifying before you for years regarding the ineffectiveness of this process— or through shared governance bodies of faculty senates or graduate student governments, it must be noted that those bodies have merely advisory roles to management decisions. Indeed, if these shared governance bodies were anything other than an attempt to make it appear employee voices were taken seriously, the university administration would already be engaging in collective bargaining as a number of these shared governance bodies have called for passage of this bill.

Maryland has long recognized the fundamental, human right of employees to band together in a shared interest to engage with their employers in collective bargaining. Let us correct this mistake and lift the exception for our 4 year higher education academic workers by passing SB 247. We call for a favorable report. Thank you.

SB247TrevorHenneberySGA_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Trevor Hennebery

Position: FAV

Committee: Finance

Testimony on: SB247, State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants

Position: Favorable

14 February 2023

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and the members of the Finance Committee,

The University of Maryland – College Park, Student Government Association supports SB247 that grants collective bargaining rights to faculty, part-time faculty, and certain graduate students at the following institutions: the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or the St. Mary's College of Maryland. This bill is significant because it protects collective bargaining procedures and creates separate units for higher education systems..

Faculty, both full and part-time, and graduate assistants commit much of their lives to their universities, devoting time and energy to it and its students. Their universities are a large part of their lives, so it is logical for these individuals to have agency in their employment. I have seen passion from my professors and other faculty members as a student at the University of Maryland. The cleaning staff for my dorm floor does incredibly taxing work, but still greets us with smiles and good-mornings when we see them. Our professors grade late into the nights and do everything they can to help us succeed, despite often teaching hundreds of students. They deserve the right to have a stake in the operation of their schools, about which they clearly care.

Furthermore, this labor goes towards the betterment of our society through education, which is something everyone should prioritize. These employees have unique understandings of their aspects of their universities, and are best suited to identify problems and solutions pertaining to such. Through collective bargaining, they will have greater power to help these problems, which will create better schools and better students. Additionally, by guaranteeing the right of university faculty to collectively bargain, Maryland would ensure that employees vital for the state's future see the representation and protection that they deserve for their service. With better pay and benefits secured via collective bargaining, retention rates will likely rise, along with the amount of people seeking employment within the universities, further improving the quality of education being delivered to Marylanders.

With improved job representation and benefits, job satisfaction and loyalty to institutions will grow. This bill will ensure a strong future of educated Marylanders coming from our own universities.

I respectfully request a favorable vote on SB247.

Thank you,



*Trevor Hennebery, Student Government Association Legislative Staff University of Maryland — College Park,
thenny@terpmail.umd.edu*

valentina.rosales.pdf

Uploaded by: Valentina Rosales

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Valentina Rosales

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Valentina Rosales, and I am a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature who has been working as a GA for the Cinema and Media Program and as a lecturer and TA for the Department of English for 5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

My workload usually consists in lecturing two courses per semester or in being a GA plus lecturing one or two courses. I have 30 to 50 students per semester which, independently on the subject matter of the course, the grading, the preparation of classes (and, in the case of my assistantship, the preparation of promotion-material, marketing, and social media) has little to do with my dissertation's research, taking away considerable time from my own academic pursuits.

My support for this bill stems from the pressure that we—graduate students—are under to both fulfill all the tasks that our assistantships and course-loads ask from us while at the same time trying to complete our dissertations to earn our title and eventually find a job. Moreover, beyond the time that the classes and assistantships take away from our research, they do not pay enough for us to support our living conditions. Most of us (especially foreign students such as myself) cannot work outside of the university, making it impossible to earn enough money to pay for rent, food, as well as UMD's mandatory fees (which are also higher for foreign students), forcing us to count on our families (or other third parties) to meet our basic economic needs. I therefore believe that enacting this bill is of crucial importance, for it would allow us to negotiate and have a voice regarding our working conditions, ultimately making our living situation less precarious.

The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. The democratic nature of the bill would grant us the right to speak up as workers, just like it is possible to do so in many other public higher ed institutions in the country, and indeed in many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. Consequently, the reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path no longer make sense. I thus iterate here my call for a favorable report to SB 247.

valerie.anishchenkova.pdf

Uploaded by: Valerie Anishchenkova

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Dr. Valerie Anishchenkova, Associate Professor at UMD
SB 247
State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate
Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

I am Associate Professor of Arabic Studies and Core Faculty in Cinema and Media Studies at the University of Maryland. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

While my usual teaching load is two courses per semester, in addition to producing research, throughout the years I have done immense amounts of administrative work and juggled various administrative positions (at times, simultaneously) that ranged from supervising 15 faculty members to serving as Principal Investigator on DOD grants that brought millions in USD to my institution. These additional administrative positions – that have neither been formally among my job duties, nor had I ever been trained to do this kind of work – resulted in numerous hours of extra work (often over 20-30 additional hours per week *on top* of my teaching load and research) for which I have not been equitably compensated.

My case with administrative overload is by no means unique at UMD. While our campus is bursting at the seams with numerous administrators, most of whom have significantly higher salaries than faculty members, faculty are constantly forced to perform various administrative duties. Professional track faculty (those of us without tenure) are in an especially dire position as they usually cannot reject requests from senior administrators to take on additional administrative tasks for the fear of losing their jobs. Enacting this bill into law will provide faculty and graduate students with an instrument to protect our right for equitable distribution of labor on our campuses.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and

indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

wichayaporn.wongkamjan.pdf

Uploaded by: Wichayaporn Wongkamjan

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Wichayaporn Wongkamjan, Research Assistant
SB 247**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty,
and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I have a student loan that I need to pay back at least \$200 a month, and the rent and expenses total are almost 1500\$ a month. I spend almost all of my monthly payments on the rent for a private bed and bathroom. All researchers deserve a good quality of living, and now I have to exchange the monthly payment for the rent without having much savings. This is not sensible, and we are not valued right.

Sincerely,
Wichayaporn Wongkamjan
Research Assistant
Department of Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park
7704 Hanover Parkway APT 202, Greenbelt, MD 20770
wwongkam@umd.edu

yue.xin.pdf

Uploaded by: Yue Xin

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Yue Xin, Doctoral Student at UMD**

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Yue Xin and I am a second year doctoral student in the College of Education, University of Maryland College Park. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

Currently I work as a graduate assistant in my department with my advisor. I receive a 20-hour payment every week, which can barely cover my rent and daily expenses. Other PhD students in my research team choose to work overload in order to support their lives. However, as an international student holding an F1 visa, I am not allowed to work overload or receive any other form of payment outside of my 20-hour salary, even if I want to. The research project I am paid for does not align with my research interest perfectly, so I am also actively looking for other research opportunities more suitable for me. But since I cannot receive more payment, I can only work on other projects for course credits in the form of independent study. It has slowed down my coursework progress, which means I need to take at least one more year of courses than other students. Moreover, this summer I am about to start my comprehensive exam, and I have been approved by my advisor to explore a different topic. In that case, next school year I even need to spend more extra time on planning my dissertation work aside from two distinct research projects and two courses.

Under this living situation, it is often hard for me to make ends meet and be 100% focused on my study. As an international student, I already suffer from higher living expenses and limited work and funding opportunities due to visa restrictions. I cannot even think of traveling to academic conferences without departmental funding, let alone visiting my family in my home country. Enacting this bill will largely improve the payment for doctoral students and help alleviate the financial struggles that I and other international doctoral students are facing. By providing fair and adequate compensation, the bill will help ensure that we can focus on our studies and research, and relieve a lot of mental burden for us.

Members of the committee, this state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to enroot democracy in our workplaces and public education institutions. The right to collective bargaining has been long recognized not only as a fundamental human right, but it has also in this state been seen as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to SB 247.

UMBC TESTIMONY ON SB0247.pdf

Uploaded by: Zane Poffenberger

Position: FAV

UMBC TESTIMONY ON SB0247
Written by Members of the UMBC GSA
UMBC Graduate Student Association

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the Finance committee,

The UMBC Graduate Student Association asks for a favorable report on SB 247. UMBC has the second largest USM graduate workforce with over 750 graduate assistants in research, teaching and administrative positions. We provide vital contributions to the research and teaching work of the faculty and the university as a whole and thereby to the prestige of education at UMBC and in the State of Maryland. GAs represent a diverse group as more than half are students of color, over 50% are women and almost 40% are international students. UMBC is a Minority Serving Institution as more than 50% of all of the student population are students of color.¹ We need the right to unionize if we choose to, in order to ensure that we have the ability to directly negotiate our pay, benefits and workplace conditions through the collective bargaining process.

UMBC graduate assistants work in both full-time (20 hours) and part-time (10 hours) capacities and receive various benefits which may include tuition remission, health insurance and a stipend. However, the benefits and stipend pay are inadequate to the living costs of GAs. The minimum stipend level for a full-time PhD student is \$2275 per month.² However, a survey of GAs at UMBC found that two-thirds of full-time respondents are Master's students, so most receive the lower pay of minimum \$1733 per month.³ MIT's living wage calculator indicates that the monthly living wage in Maryland for a single adult is \$3063 per month, which is 77% higher than the minimum GA pay at UMBC.⁴ The average rent for a 1 bedroom apartment in the surrounding area is \$1,000, which is unaffordable at \$1733 per month.⁵ More than 15% of the respondents reported responsibility for 1 or more dependents as well, which is even more untenable on these salaries, especially as there is no subsidized dependent health insurance available. Baltimore's cost of living is already 7% higher than the national average, and further increases in utilities, groceries, gas and other expenses often place an economic hardship on GAs. In addition, 64% of respondents said that their stipend does not cover their monthly living expenses. Graduate assistants are currently unable to negotiate pay with their departments if their needs are unmet. Graduate assistants also cannot engage with the university to create, negotiate, mediate, and enforce formal and binding contract agreements. GAs should be granted the right

¹ <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/glance/>

² <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/funding/assistantships/stipends/>

³ <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/funding/assistantships/stipends/>

⁴ <https://livingwage.mit.edu/metros/12580>

⁵ <https://livingwage.mit.edu/metros/12580>

that state and public sector employees enjoy in being able to enter into the collective bargaining process if we so choose. Under these circumstances, some qualified students have to forgo graduate school in Maryland, so we miss the contribution of their research, their ideas, and their participation in the workforce and the economy of Maryland.

The current process of "Meet and Confer " which is supposed to involve formal discussions between graduate school leadership and student leaders by way of the Graduate Assistant Advisory Committee is not a sufficient solution for problems that GAs encounter. Meet and Confer entails a formal meeting wherein GAs ask graduate school administrators questions and voice their current concerns regarding pay, workplace conditions and other important issues. At UMBC, the formal "Meet and Confer " process did not take place for 2 years, from 2020 until Fall of 2022. Further, this process does not bind nor does it create any agreements that the graduate school must pursue, and even the mandatory report that each university must make to USM each semester provides no way for graduate students to directly articulate lingering concerns. For instance, this past fall, numerous students across colleges and programs experienced not being paid for weeks or months, with no streamlined, systematic, or timely way to report or address these issues. Problems that GAs face in their departments cannot wait until the GA committee coordinates a meeting with administration. UMBC administration was unaware of these issues until a GA town hall halfway through the semester. These issues are not mentioned in the report to USM.

The UMBC GSA stands with other student leaders and graduate assistants within the USM system in calling for the right to engage in collective bargaining. We ask this committee to grant a favorable report to SB 247 and extend this basic labor right to graduate assistant workers within the USM.

Respectfully,

UMBC GSA

ziad.bentahar.pdf

Uploaded by: Ziad Bentahar

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Ziad Bentahar, PhD

SB 247

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

February 16, 2023

FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee. My name is Ziad Bentahar and I am Associate Professor at Towson University, where I have worked since 2014. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to SB 247. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

At Towson, I typically teach seven college courses per academic year. I teach courses in Arabic and French language and culture at various levels from absolute beginner to advanced fluency. I have also taught first-year seminars to introduce incoming students to the rigors of college work, and a graduate seminar in Global Humanities for Master's students. As a faculty member, I am in the classroom, in direct contact with our rising generations as they seek a public education for a fair chance in society. Previously, I taught college courses at two other universities in other States, as well as at a third university overseas, for a total of approximately two decades of university teaching experience. Therefore, my testimony is informed not only by my work in a public academic institution in Maryland, but also by the broader national and international context of the educational stakes in our State.

Our work as faculty requires devoted focus, time, and energy to ensure quality of education and production of knowledge. This makes it impossible to dedicate additional time to communicate effectively with administration. Research shows that Collective Bargaining can strengthen relations between administration and faculty. Collective Bargaining allows us faculty to concentrate on our vocation as educators, educating the people of the State, their children and relatives, their neighbors, coworkers, service providers, and their fellow citizens and human beings. Just because education is a labor of love, it doesn't mean it's not labor. As such, it deserves the same rights as any other form of labor in America. Collective Bargaining is a basic democratic right that ensures fair working conditions that the faculty deserve, not only because they are literally in the

classrooms and labs, deep in the nitty gritty of public education, but also because they are citizens of Maryland deserving of the dignity and ideals of this country.

Additionally, while the numbers of students have increased steadily over the years, the numbers of faculty have decreased. Collective Bargaining for faculty will create conditions that make the professions of education more attractive for potential future educators. It will ensure that we don't run out of professors. It is the faculty of tomorrow who will enable our universities to continue to be hubs of knowledge production and scientific innovations, and attract the best and brightest from within our shores as well as beyond. Collective Bargaining safeguards our public universities because it makes the profession of faculty member an appealing job prospect to rising generations of Marylanders preparing to enter the workforce. Our public universities are too important to our society; let's make them attractive workplaces for the faculty of the future, lest we waste our potential as world leaders in science and education.

Esteemed committee members, I call for a **favorable report to SB 247**. Collective bargaining is beneficial to public education in Maryland. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. Please support our educators' right to have the option to organize, and pursue their vocation while having access to fair and transparent workplace conditions.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Ziad Bentahar

SB247_USM_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Andy Clark

Position: UNF



SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
Senate Bill 247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining -
Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023
Unfavorable

Chair Griffith, Vice-Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 247.

Shared Governance, which has been an integral part of higher education for 100 years, is a way of ensuring meaningful faculty and graduate student participation in institutional governance. USM produces an [annual report](#) on Shared Governance that emphasizes the importance of faculty involvement in personnel decisions, selection of administrators, preparation of the budget, and determination of educational policies. Shared Governance within the USM is dynamic and nimble. It has been informed over the years by consistent dialogue including actionable items on faculty governance and academic freedom; budgetary and salary matters; financial exigency; the selection, evaluation, and retention of administrators; college athletics; governance and collective bargaining; and the faculty status of college and university librarians.

It should not be understated that graduate assistant and faculty collective bargaining in Maryland, and subsequent unionization of these units would cause significant disruption to operations across every administrative and academic unit of each university. While the shift would be felt most acutely day to day by Academic Affairs, the administrative offices of Human Resources would be tasked with leading, facilitating, and otherwise maintaining the formal labor relationship with the bargaining units' elected representatives. This will further tax existing positions within campus human resource departments. This excludes the education, training, and guidance which will be required to facilitate all necessary parties to a collective bargaining structure. It is likely that should it come to pass, at least in the inaugural year of a formal bargaining relationship with faculty and graduate assistant populations, that additional personnel would be necessary, at minimum for administrative support purposes. Without any exclusionary language in the bill, there are potential additional challenges of navigating the consolidated collective bargaining process.

For faculty, both tenure-track and adjunct, a collective bargaining structure would tend to eliminate institution's attention to salary competition within disciplines. Such standardization of scales, which - common to organized labor pay structures - would conceivably dilute competition for higher end faculty positions (e.g. STEM, Business, Health Professions), and further affect both recruitment and retention of highly qualified faculty.

Such a structure risks USM institutions being hamstrung to continue incentivizing people to stay through retention raises and equity adjustments, which they now have the flexibility to administer, and may not under a collective bargaining structure.

Faculty and graduate students play an integral part in the ability of USM institutions to provide the scope and quality of educational experiences expected of Maryland's senior public institutions of higher education. Graduate assistants, in addition to pursuing their own education and Master's or Doctoral degree through taking classes and conducting research, complement the teaching and research activities of the faculty, and in doing so allow the faculty to engage more students in focused instructional opportunities. They also provide the institution with an ability to more rapidly adjust the educational opportunities to meet student needs and preferences that can't be accommodated for by the faculty alone. The USM values the important role played by graduate assistants in facilitating an institution's charge to promote teaching, research, and public service, and also want to emphasize that they are students first. Graduate assistants' tuition is paid for by the institution where they are attending in addition to health benefits and a stipend.

The USM, however, is asking the committee to adopt an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 247. The actual, true cost, fiscal impact of Senate Bill 247 is inestimable. It is difficult to assess the fiscal impact of establishing collective bargaining rights for graduate assistants – let alone faculty. For comparison, a recent collective bargaining agreement at the University of California increased average costs by over \$5,000 per graduate student. This would equate to tens of millions of dollars if a similar cost was incurred for each graduate student in the USM.

The USM respectfully urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 247.



About the University System of Maryland

The University System of Maryland (USM)—one system made up of 12 institutions, three regional centers, and a central office—awards 8 out of every 10 bachelor’s degrees in the State of Maryland. The USM is governed by a Board of Regents, comprised of 21 members from diverse professional and personal backgrounds. The chancellor, Dr. Jay Perman, oversees and manages the operations of USM. However, each constituent institution is run by its own president who has authority over that university. Each of USM’s 12 institutions has a distinct and unique approach to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from western Maryland to the Eastern Shore, with the flagship campus in the Washington suburbs. The USM includes Historically Black Colleges and Universities, comprehensive institutions, research universities, and the country’s largest public online institution.

USM Office of Government Relations - Patrick Hogan: phogan@usmd.edu

SB 247 State Personnel – Collective Bargaining – F

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Position: UNF

Senate Bill 247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining
Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
Senate Finance Committee
February 16, 2023

Unfavorable

Chair Griffith and Members of the Finance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on Senate Bill 247. Establishing collective bargaining rights for faculty would disrupt the principles of shared governance, the deliberative, collaborative, and collegial process by which institutional decisions are made. Shared governance enables stakeholders to focus on what is in the best interest of our students and the long-term viability of the institution, rather than on what is best for the individual.

The College's current model of shared governance works well, enabling the institution to fulfill its educational mission. The recent innovative restructuring of the College's academic majors and core curriculum were the product of the principles of shared governance. Realignment of academic programming is challenging, but essential for the College to remain relevant to the needs of Maryland's students and the Maryland economy. Under a faculty collective bargaining environment, it is probable that the pressures to maintain the status quo would outweigh the need to make critical and difficult decisions quickly and equitably to ensure the College provides a vibrant academic program that meets the needs of our students.

In addition, work-place conditions for faculty are currently established in the College's Faculty Bylaws. These include rights and responsibilities such as tenure, resources, academic freedom, and disciplinary procedures. Development and revision of the Faculty Bylaws is undertaken within the construct of shared governance and has been effective. Collective bargaining is unnecessary.

Last, establishing collective bargaining rights for faculty would add additional responsibilities for management, including the need for additional staff in human resources, restructuring of job responsibilities within academic affairs for non-bargaining supervisors, and substantial training.

For these reasons, I urge an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 247.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.



Tuajuanda C. Jordan, PhD
President

The
**NATIONAL
PUBLIC
HONORS**
College



2023 Collective Bargaining Testimony on SB247 (1)

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Position: UNF



**OFFICE OF THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
AND PROVOST**

**Senate Finance Committee
Senate Bill 247
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining -
Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
February 16, 2023
Urging an Unfavorable Report**

Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing us to testify on Senate Bill 247, which would authorize faculty and graduate assistants to collectively bargain.

I. Faculty Collective Bargaining

Shared governance

The University of Maryland enjoys a robust tradition of shared governance through its University Senate as well as academic unit governance processes. Faculty (inclusive of tenure track, non-tenure track, adjuncts, and librarians), staff, and students have representation in the University Senate, which openly promotes, develops, debates, and shapes University policies and procedures. Several recent University Senate legislative activities into which our faculty had direct input relate to faculty work-life matters such as merit pay, paid parental leave, family medical leave, tenure delays for tenure track faculty members, a revised structure for the appointment and promotion of non-tenure track faculty (now referred to as Professional Track Faculty), workload, accommodation under the ADA, non-discrimination policies and procedures, and grievance policies and procedures. Our faculty, staff, and students are also part of the University System of Maryland's system-wide shared governance bodies, who annually advise the USM Chancellor on the state of shared governance on their campus. We are deeply concerned that unionization of the faculty would disrupt, and likely harm, our long standing and highly valued shared governance process both in principle and in practice.

Alongside the strong University Senate shared governance culture, all categories of faculty are engaged in the governance of their academic units, including faculty hiring and identification of candidates for department chairs and academic deans. Developed collaboratively by faculty, each academic unit has a formal Plan of Organization that establishes unit-level governance policies and procedures. Importantly, it is unit level policies and procedures that determine the distribution of merit pay through a collaborative and collegial process. Again, we are deeply concerned that collective bargaining would interfere detrimentally with the existing faculty-driven process for merit pay, but also likely in other areas of unit governance.

In addition, faculty members have full control over curricular initiatives and the University's academic programs through our shared governance process. This faculty-driven process is essential to the University's ability to innovate, manage, and implement its educational programs, and we have serious concerns about the impact of collective bargaining on the University's autonomy over its educational programs and the allocation of resources required to meet the needs of those programs.

Each Spring, the University hosts a "meet and confer" session with our adjunct faculty, which provides a venue for them to provide vital input to the University's administration on issues and concerns that they may have. Recent examples of positive outcomes from our "meet and confer" process include modifications to appointment processes to enable more timely access to learning technology infrastructure for course preparation; working with our Division of Information Technology to provide remote University phone service access for adjuncts to facilitate communication with students; modifications to faculty onboarding and orientation processes; and increases in the minimum per course stipend for adjuncts. The "meet and confer" process provides an essential touch point between adjunct faculty and our academic administrators that collective bargaining would likely place at risk.

As an avenue for individual faculty concerns, the University has a Faculty Ombudsperson who provides mediation and other support services to mitigate and resolve potential conflicts, grievances, and/or difficulties faculty may encounter in their professional University activities. As articulated in policy developed through our University Senate, the Faculty Ombudsperson is an essential actor in our University's grievance policy and procedures. We are extremely concerned about the interjection of collective bargaining into our University's established grievance process, which in addition to the Faculty Ombudsperson, can involve a University Senate review committee composed of faculty peers.

Salaries

We would like to sincerely thank the legislature for its support of our state employees in general and our faculty in particular through the cost of living increases and merit pay appropriations during fiscal years 2022 and 2023. In raw percentages, our faculty received an overall 13.5% increase in salaries which, when compounded, actually yielded a salary increase of 14.2%. We are also appreciative of Governor Moore's FY24 proposed budget, which includes an additional cost of living adjustment and salary increment funding. Accomplished through strong partnership with our legislators and the Governor and without faculty union representation or collective bargaining, the investment in our faculty enables us to continue to recruit and retain outstanding and diverse scholars, in service to Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, and beyond. Our faculty are deeply engaged in innovative K-12 educational programs such as providing advanced math classes in local high schools, entrepreneurship that serves as an engine for economic development in emerging areas such as quantum computing, state-of-the-art agricultural practices, and external funding (nearly \$700 million in FY22) that leads to ground breaking research and support for graduate and undergraduate students as well as post-doctoral scholars.

In short, we express concern that collective bargaining may negatively impact our ability to reward and recognize our faculty members. Further, we see no apparent additional benefit that collective bargaining would yield in terms of salary enhancements for our faculty members.

Benefits eligibility

Our faculty with appointments of 50% FTE or higher have access to a generous benefits package that includes employer-subsidized health benefits, retirement benefits, tuition remission for self, tuition remission for spouses and dependents, paid parental leave and other family supports, adoption leave, sick leave, family medical leave, accident leave, and leave for jury service, among others. This compares to other peer universities which have higher thresholds for benefits eligibility and/or do not provide access to similar benefits such as tuition remission (for example, the Universities of Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin-Madison do not provide tuition remission benefits for dependents). Our benefits package remains an attractive recruitment and retention mechanism for faculty members, especially as it includes eligibility for faculty who are less than 100% FTE. We want to ensure that we are able to continue to provide our faculty members with a comprehensive set of benefits in order to remain competitive against both our peers and regional competitors.

Additional Concerns

In addition to the above articulated concerns, the below highlight other areas that require further consideration regarding the impact of collective bargaining:

- We currently have a number of faculty leadership and development initiatives that provide a range of support to our faculty members as their careers progress.
- We support our faculty through the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, which provides no-fee counseling services to faculty members and their families. These services were particularly essential during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, often pivoting in real-time to meet the needs of our faculty members.
- We provide our faculty members with flexibility in their work arrangements, teaching loads, service, research, and other areas of their work.

Collective bargaining may interfere with these significant areas of faculty activities, impacting our competitiveness with our peer institutions and universities in our region, as well as erode the quality of the University's work environment.

II. Graduate Student Collective Bargaining

Unlike faculty, graduate assistants are not considered employees; they are students, first and foremost, and their duties as graduate teaching and research assistants are part of their education. Many doctoral programs expect or require all students to teach as part of their education, not only to prepare them as potential future faculty, but to gain experience explaining complex subjects and to understand the subject more deeply by learning to explain it to others.

Research assistantships allow students to learn to do original research and scholarship under the guidance of a faculty mentor—research that is often identical to the research that is required for their degree.

The university's "Meet and Confer" process—where an elected group of GAs meets with the Provost, the Vice President for Administration, and the Dean of the Graduate School at least once each semester to discuss concerns and solutions—has been a productive avenue to address student concerns and solutions for the past 13 years.

In response to concerns about stipend levels, the minimum stipend has increased 32% in the last year and by 58% over the last five years. Most departments set stipends above the minimum—up to \$34,600 (20 hours a week for 9 months) and \$44,000 (20 hours a week for 12 months). Average stipends are \$27,600 (20 hours a week for 9 months) and \$36,900 (20 hours a week for 12 months).

Graduate assistants receive up to 10 credits of tuition each semester and 4 credits during winter term, with a value up to \$42,465 per year. GAs with 12-month appointments also receive 8 credits during summer term, for a total value up to \$56,620 per year in free tuition. GAs have access to the same health insurance plans on the same subsidized basis as faculty and staff. GA stipend and benefits are worth more than \$60,000 per year to the average student.

Other positive "Meet and Confer" outcomes include policies for parental accommodation, time away from duties, and a grievance process. Expectation-setting meetings between GAs and their supervisors are required, and statements of mutual expectation have been developed to guide them. In response to concerns that GAs were working more than 20 hours per week, we commissioned an independent study which showed GAs spend an average of 18 hours per week on their duties—including 6 hours that contribute to a student's own research required for the degree.

The "Meet and Confer" process provides GAs with many of the benefits that collective bargaining offers, including the right to engage a labor organization to assist them in this process. In the 13 years that the "Meet and Confer" process has been in place, GAs have declined to engage a labor organization.

In addition to the "Meet and Confer" process, graduate students serve on the University Senate and on the Graduate Council, which sets policy for graduate education, including graduate assistantships. We also meet regularly with the leadership of the Graduate Student Government.

The Graduate School encourages students to report violations of Graduate School and University policy, including excessive hours, harassment, unacceptable behavior, or unsafe conditions. The Graduate Student Ombuds Officer provides confidential and informal assistance in resolving conflicts and promotes fair and equitable treatment. The Graduate School can take formal action to investigate and resolve problems as needed. Collective bargaining would limit the University's ability to address graduate student problems as they arise and reduce the current flexibility to tailor solutions to the situation of a particular student.

The financial impact of collective bargaining would depend on the details of whatever contract is negotiated, but it could be substantial. Advocates of collective bargaining have argued for stipend levels of more than \$46,000 per year. Raising stipends to that level would cause a \$60 million per year increase in instructional expenditure, requiring a 10 percent increase in State

appropriation or a 10 percent increase in tuition. If State appropriations and tuition did not rise to cover this increase, the result would be a 40 percent decrease in the number of GA appointments—and a corresponding decrease in the size of doctoral programs, the production of PhDs, and the contribution of our PhD programs to the Maryland knowledge economy.

In addition to increased stipends, collective bargaining could lead to changes in benefits. GAs already have access to the same health plans as faculty and staff. Their student status exempts them from Social Security and Medicare tax, but adding additional benefits could result in GAs being reclassified as “professional employees,” subject to additional taxes. The University may need to withhold 7.65% from a GA’s taxable compensation and pay an equal employer’s share. Unemployment insurance and union dues are an additional cost. Expenditures for a GA could increase by more than 17% with no increase in student take-home pay. Moreover, students whose duties are not related to teaching or research could be excluded from GA appointments, or much of their tuition benefit could be subject to income tax.

Research assistantships, which are included in HB 275, are particularly difficult to adapt to collective bargaining. There often is a large overlap between the research a student does as a research assistant, and the research a student does for their dissertation and degree. The former is essential training for the latter, and it is often impossible to determine where one ends and the other begins. Completing a dissertation—a piece of original research and scholarship—requires many hours of effort regardless of whether the student has a research assistantship, and the amount of effort required for the degree cannot be affected by collective bargaining. For this reason, most institutions that have collective bargaining for teaching assistants do not extend it to research assistants. Of the five Big Ten institutions with collective bargaining for GAs, only Rutgers includes research assistants, and the contract specifies that it has no impact on the research work needed to satisfy degree requirements.

Finally, collective bargaining takes a long time and stable relationships. This is difficult when the union representation is inexperienced and turns over every few years as students graduate. If collective bargaining is permitted, students who support union membership will leave campus soon after any election is held. A union will already be in place, and students who come after will have no say in whether it should exist. This is very different from the situation with faculty and staff, who remain as university employees for many years.

We are advocates for all graduate students, including GAs. We want all graduate students to succeed and to help resolve any problems that arise. Collective bargaining is not a path to this outcome that is in the best interests of UMD graduate students or the University.



Jennifer King Rice
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
University of Maryland, College Park



Steve Fetter
Associate Provost and Dean, The Graduate School
University of Maryland, College Park

Minimum Graduate Assistant Stipends and Collective Bargaining Status
Big Ten Public Universities, Spring 2023, 20 hour/week appointment

Institution	Minimum Stipend		Collective Bargaining?		
	Academic Year	Full Year	TA	AA	RA
Rutgers ¹	30,162	33,999	Y	Y	Y
Maryland ²	26,102	32,972			
Michigan ³	24,055		Y	Y	
Penn State	22,005	29,340			
Indiana	22,000				
Ohio State	21,280	28,373			
Wisconsin	21,115	25,808			
Iowa	20,708	25,300	Y	Y	
Illinois	19,300	25,733	Y	Y	
Purdue	18,880	24,124			
Michigan St ⁴	18,085	24,024	Y		
Minnesota	16,177	21,570			
Nebraska	10,930	14,573			

¹Standard appointment is 15 hours per week.

²For doctoral students on 9.5 appointments, which comprise the majority of academic-year appointments; the minimum for master's students is \$25,574. All TAs and 70% of all academic-year GA appointments are 9.5-month appointments. The minimum stipend for 9-month appointments is \$24,228 for master's and \$24,752 for doctoral students.

³No minimum full-year stipend.

⁴For TAs. The minimum academic-year stipend for non-union AAs and RAs is \$15,561.

Average Cost of Attendance and Average Stipend, AY22-23 (9 months)

Cost	Graduate Student	Graduate Assistant
Tuition (10 credits/semester)	\$35,388	—
Mandatory fees	\$1,210	\$1,210
Off-campus rent, utilities, food	\$15,057	\$15,057
Personal expenses	\$1,197	\$1,197
Books and supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000
Transportation	\$3,060	\$3,060
Health insurance	\$2,334	\$950
Income taxes	—	\$2,316
Average cost of attendance	\$59,246	\$24,790
Average academic-year stipend	—	\$27,600

Tuition is at the non-resident rate. Health insurance is the employee portion of the lowest-cost State plan for GAs and the student health insurance plan for other students. Other costs are estimated by the Office of Student Financial Aid according to federal guidelines; see <https://financialaid.umd.edu/resources-policies/cost-attendance>.

SB 247 Senate Finance Committee 2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Sidd Kaza

Position: UNF



February 16, 2023

**Office of Graduate
Studies**
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

**The Honorable Melony Griffith
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401**

RE: Senate Bill 0247 State Personnel-Collective Bargaining

Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 247, which would authorize graduate assistants to collectively bargain. Towson University respectfully opposes this legislation and urges the Senate Finance Committee for an unfavorable report.

Towson University is the largest public university in the Baltimore Region with a current enrollment of 20,000 students. We take pride in compensating our faculty, staff, and students fairly and to date these groups have had little interest in pursuing unionization.

Of the approximately 3,000 graduate students at TU, about 10% are currently graduate assistants (10 or 20hr positions) with less than 70 of them as teaching assistants. Due to the relatively small number of assistants on campus, all are invited to the university's "Meet and Confer" meetings.

The university's "Meet and Confer" process, is an open invitation to all assistants to attend a meeting with the Provost, Vice President for Administration and Finance, Vice President of Operations and Chief Human Resources Officer, and the Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. These meetings occur once each semester for them to discuss their concerns and solutions. It is a learning opportunity for both administration and students with many individual problems identified over the years that have been quickly addressed by directing students to resources already available. It has been a productive avenue to address student concerns and develop pathways to solutions for the past eleven years.

Graduate students have a valued role in shared governance at TU. They are included as members of multiple college and university level committees including those addressing university budget, curriculum, and student appeals. The Graduate Student Association President is an ex officio member of the Academic Senate. I meet weekly with the leadership of the Graduate Student Association.

The stipends of all assistantships have been steadily increased at TU. Increases of 74% or above since Spring 2018 have occurred for the lowest paid master's level assistants and an increase of 40% or above for doctoral teaching and research assistants. TU awarded both state COLAs (3.0% July 2022, 4.5% November 2022) that were funded by the state for faculty and staff to the graduate assistants over the current academic year. Between the increase in stipend levels, adding additional assistantship positions and higher tuition waiver costs, TU has increased its investment in our graduate assistants by approximately \$1.1 million since Spring 2018.

The Office of Graduate Studies encourages and supports students in reporting violations of Graduate and University policies. Through shared governance processes and other resources available on campus,

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<https://www.towson.edu/academics/graduate/office/>



graduate students have the support networks (Counseling Center, Student Affairs, Advising, Title IX, and Office of Graduate Studies) that they need to resolve problems. Collective bargaining would limit our ability to respond to individual cases and to develop personalized solutions for students in need.

The impact of collective bargaining would depend on the details of the contract negotiated and could have a substantial downside for our students. The ones most likely to impact TU students would be a decrease in take home pay or a smaller number of positions available without state appropriation support to cover increased stipend and benefit costs. The decrease in positions would impact the number of financially struggling students able to complete their graduate degrees and become valuable members of the Maryland workforce with minimal graduate student loan burden.

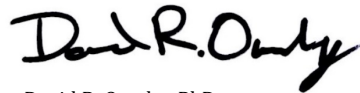
Collective bargaining for research assistants would also impact faculty and student research productivity, changing the mentor/mentee relationship to one of employer/employee and by increasing the proportion of grants dedicated to student salary and benefits, therefore reducing the amount available for doing the proposed project. Graduate deans and research faculty at universities with unionized graduate students report that the number of doctoral students supported is decreasing due to costs and faculty choices to fund other position types instead of research assistantships with their limited grant funds.

The Office of Graduate Studies is an active advocate for graduate student success both in and out of the classroom. We support graduate student success and provide problem solving when issues arise. Collective bargaining is not a pathway that has been actively explored by TU graduate students and would not be in their best interests. Our students' concerns are being heard and addressed within the current procedures in place.

Sincerely,



Sidd Kaza, PhD
Associate Provost of Research and Dean of Graduate Studies



David R. Ownby, PhD
Associate Dean of Graduate Studies

