

**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