

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.