

**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,  
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