

**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.