

**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.