

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 658
Supporting

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

I am writing to support the swift and definitive passage of SB 658, allowing for the graduate students to legally decide whether collective bargaining is best for them.

Collective bargaining has a history of improving the lives and wellbeing of many workers, and as employees of the University of Maryland graduate students deserve this right as much as any other employees. We work to teach the next generation of Maryland scholars, professionals, artists, and other highly skilled workers to better the lives, economy, and complement the myriad of other Marylanders that make this state the way it is today.

Unlike many other jobs, disparities arise from department to department on campus, with pay varying drastically for the same amount of labor. This is unacceptable, forcing graduate students to undergo even more stress than is already placed upon them with expectations of teaching, classes, and research. It is untenable to then place the extraordinary stress of near-poverty simply because of the department they are in.

Given the fantastic contributions of these employees to the State of Maryland, there's simply no excuse to deny the right to collectively bargain for reasonable living conditions and fair compensation for these contributions. I look forward to seeing SB 658 enable a better, brighter future for our state and our university.

Sincerely,

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