

02/08/2021

House Bill 894—Education-Community Colleges-Collective Bargaining

SUPPORT

Dear Chairperson McIntosh and members of the Appropriations Committee:

I have taught at a Maryland community college since 2018, where I teach English as a second language. Any teaching experience involves an engaged and mentorlike relationship with students, and that takes long hours - many more than are spent in the classroom. But helping people who are trying to adjust to a new country may be even more demanding. Often the professor is the main “go to” for all kinds of information about how to navigate a new home.

Unfortunately, although I have loved having this supportive role with my students, I find that without the ability to join together in union with my colleagues, I, like so many others, lack sufficient professional support. This makes matters from professional development to engaging with our campus communities especially difficult for adjunct and part-time faculty, who do not always have the same resources at our disposal as our full-time colleagues. During the pandemic, when we have had to scramble to rework our courses for online virtual learning, this lack of support has been all the more apparent. As we look to resuming in-person learning, with all of the health and safety risks that will entail, it is more important than ever that adjunct faculty have a voice and a means of expressing our ideas and concerns. Experience has shown that the only way we can gain that voice is through collective bargaining.

Adjuncts have been the primary source of instruction at Maryland’s community colleges for years, but we still do not yet have a seat at the table. We are truly the serfs of higher education. Now that we find ourselves to be vital in preparing Marylanders to become productive members of our community in a post-COVID economy, we need the support of our administrations. A union will bring this badly needed support.

I ask you to vote yes on HB 894 and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

In solidarity,

Kim Lungociu

Adjunct Professor