

February 8, 2021

House Bill 894—Education—Community Colleges—Collective Bargaining

SUPPORT

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Mary Kambic and I have been an adjunct instructor at Baltimore City College (BCCC) and the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) in Catonsville for a total of eighteen years. During this time, I have witnessed situations and treatment of adjuncts, from the failure of part-time faculty to receive pay for three months, with no explanation or communication from the college administration, to the everyday lack of protections that are guaranteed other employees of the public sector. After experience of absolutely no job security, no benefits, and no assurance of classes assigned to faculty each semester, I am happy to stand with my colleagues in support of HB894—Education—Community Colleges—Collective Bargaining. We are convinced that we should have the right, along with our brother and sister workers, to decide whether or not we want to be represented by a union.

We consider our quest for formal representation as also benefitting our students. Our working conditions impact our students, not only in classroom situations, but in our contacts in meeting privately with students, ability to be paid for office hours, and facilitating availability which adjuncts presently do not have. Also, more importantly, agreed upon standards for teaching will hold faculty to accepted standards so poor teaching can be rooted out. Adjuncts can help the colleges guarantee responsible standards for students.

My experience working with people organizing for basic rights impacts my position today. I began working with farmworkers during the Grape Boycott of Cesar Chavez back in the late 60s. Seeing how a community of laborers forced an elite group of growers to see them as people deserving rights to clean water, protection from pesticides and the right to decide their working lives stay with Americans to this day. Chavez always said there was no justice until employers sat at the same table with their employees. Maryland community college adjunct faculty deserve the same experience. I ask you to vote yes on HB 894 and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

Mary Kambic