

02/04/2021

House Bill 894 – Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining

SUPPORT

Dear members of the Appropriations Committee:

I am Joan Bevelaqua and I am an adjunct professor at Howard Community College in Columbia Maryland and Prince George's Community College in Largo Maryland. I am in support of bill HB894 –Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining.

I deserve the right to decide for myself whether I want to be represented by a union. This is a fundamental right that over 200,000 other public sector workers enjoy, and community college employees should not be denied this basic right. Covid-19 has made my teaching more difficult and the inconsistency in additional support have been paralyzing during this pandemic. Last March we went home to redesign our courses to go online with little to no help or support from the community colleges' administration. We spent hours in training with no compensation and I've invested my own money purchasing equipment needed to continue to present my classes online. As an adjunct I should be respected and protected for my work with enough representation and resources on the job.

Without Collective Bargaining we have no say on the terms and conditions of our contracts or our working conditions. Without Collective Bargaining we have been left to the arbitrary whims of the college's administration. With Collective Bargaining we can negotiate commitments to future compensation enhancements; forms supporting job security; annual appointments; professional development funds, joint labor management committees; rank advancement; secured working and stable schedules; improved health and wellness, etc.

Our working conditions are our students learning conditions. If you have spoken with one passionate professor you have spoken to us all. We understand and care how important we are to the future of our country, and we need to collectively have a voice through a union.

We need to have a seat at the table, we need to have rights, we need a union. This is the year to make this change.

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

In solidarity,

Joan Bevelaqua
Adjunct Professor