



PROGRESSIVE MARYLAND

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Testimony on Maryland House Bill 894: Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining

TO: Del. McIntosh, Chair, and members of the House Appropriations Committee
FROM: Jennifer Mendes Dwyer, Deputy Executive Director, Progressive Maryland
DATE: February 8th, 2021
POSITION: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on HB894. Progressive Maryland is a grassroots, nonprofit organization with 9 chapters from Frederick to the Lower Shore and more than 100,000 members and supporters who live in nearly every legislative district in the state. In addition, there are dozens of affiliated community, faith, and labor organizations across the state that stand behind our work. Our mission is to improve the lives of working families in Maryland. Please note our strong support for this bill.

For far too long, most of Maryland's adjunct community college professors have been forbidden from unionizing. They lack access to the same collective bargaining rights enjoyed by our K-12 teachers and many of their co-workers in non-faculty positions. This means that, despite being among the most educated Marylanders, they don't have employee benefits or even job security, as they're hired on a semester-to-semester basis. They lack a voice when it comes to working conditions, operations, and how our students are educated. Some adjunct faculty members with whom I've spoken, people with Ph.D.s, have told me that their wages work out to just slightly above the state minimum wage and that they have to work side jobs to make ends meet. This is inexcusable.

HB894 will allow adjunct community college faculty to bargain around wages, work hours, and other terms and conditions of their employment, as many other workers across our state do. It will greatly improve quality of life for these workers, who are talented and passionate educators and are advancing human knowledge across a vast array of fields.

Granting community college professors the right to collectively bargain is the ethical thing to do as well as a critical investment in our college students and the future of our state. We urge a favorable report on HB894.