

02/05/2021

House Bill 894 – Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining

SUPPORT

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee:

Hello. My name is Valeria Pappas-Brown and I am an adjunct at the Community College of Baltimore County, mainly at the Essex campus. I support House Bill HB 894---Education-Community Colleges-Collective Bargaining. All workers including myself should have the opportunity to choose to be represented by a union. This is a fundamental right that over 200,000 other Maryland public sector workers enjoy and working at a community college should not negate our right to collectively bargain with our employer. This is a basic right that should be afforded to all Maryland workers.

I teach Math and Science and the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the necessity to have a voice at my workplace. I am not afforded training nor equipment for teaching remotely, nor the necessary PPE to interact with my lab students face to face. This effects my students and the outcomes for them to be able to move on professionally and academically. It would be a true asset to myself and students, when teaching remotely, to be offered training on how to be a more effective in the virtual classroom.

In addition, if I am exposed in one of my face to face classes to COVID, the opportunity for health care for adjunct faculty are non-existent at my institution. I often do not know that I am teaching a class at all until 3 days before a semester. How can anyone plan lessons with this type of notice? We have very little voice at our workplace, and this negatively impacts the morale of my students. Also, I was disciplined last semester for a suggestion about curriculum for a course I taught for 4 years. I was not asked to teach it this semester. My working conditions are my students learning conditions. We are over 65% of the faculty at CCBC and we teach 65% of the credit and non-credit students at CCBC. CCBC has over 70,000 students across their campuses.

It is imperative that the General Assembly make passing this bill paramount for all community college workers, especially adjuncts. We need legislation that allows us to run safely and hit the ground running to build Maryland back and the youth back academically, after this pandemic is over.

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

In solidarity,

Valeria Pappas-Brown, Ph.D.
Adjunct Faculty
Math and Science Department
Community College of Baltimore County

