

March 4, 2021

Senate Bill 746 – Education – Community Colleges – Collective Bargaining

Dear Members of the Finance Committee:

I am Karen Grossman and I have been an adjunct professor at Howard Community College since 2007. Previous to that, I was an instructor, department chair, teacher's union representative, and arts advocate in the Montgomery County school system and Art Education Association for over 30 years. I am in support of bill SB746 – Education -- Community Colleges -- Collective Bargaining.

I have really enjoyed my opportunity to teach at HCC, but the need for a union at the college level was one of the first things I noticed when I began teaching here. Although the college provides *some* opportunities for adjunct input, we need and deserve the right to have the same collective bargaining that over 200,000 public employees enjoy in the state of Maryland.

When Covid-19 hit last March, instructors began preparing to teach their courses online. I did not get that choice because the courses I have taught were cancelled due to logistics. The only one in our department who is still teaching is the chair, and she is using another medium to teach her course. After serving HCC for over 13 years, I was appalled at the lack of transparency of consistent communication from the administration in how they were going to restructure – it has had a tremendous impact on the faculty that could be described as a professional breach of trust. This is not a way to treat professionals you appreciate and want to keep.

Collective bargaining would allow us to have a seat at the table with our administration to negotiate future compensation, job security, professional development funding, advancement, health and wellness, etc. Without it, we have no say in the terms of our contracts or working conditions and are left to the whims of our administrators. They know without it, they have no obligation to make any changes to our current conditions which can have a direct impact on our students.

I have obligated myself to the education of our young people for the past 40 years – it is a pledge that draws a hopeful citizenry to our shores. Knowing the commitment you *also* have to excellent education in the state of Maryland, I strongly urge you to vote “YES!” on SB 746.

In Solidarity,

Karen Grossman
Adjunct Professor