

Delores G. Kelley, Chair
Brian J. Feldman, Vice Chair
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

SB 521
Supporting

Dear Chair Kelley, Vice Chair Feldman, and Members of the Finance Committee,

As a graduate student employee working 20 hours per week and attending class full-time, my dedication to the University of Maryland-College Park is self-evident. As a communications assistant in a large College on campus, I produce content accessible to students, alumni, researchers and other professionals. Essentially, I act as a community liaison and play a part in setting the public image of the University.

I am dedicated to both my studies and work on campus, and aspire for the University to succeed on a national and international platform. However, whether the University treats graduate student employees with similar respect can at times seem tenuous.

If the University of Maryland-College Park were as fearless as it claims, the right for students to collectively bargain would be a nonissue. Other universities that have such rights boast graduate students who feel backed and heard by their university, making for great success in graduate school. Moreover, much of that graduate student success is a reflection of the university, which benefits similarly in promotion and research dollars .

If the University of Maryland-College Park wishes to position itself as a premier research and higher education institution in the Big 10, then the University must accept the responsibility of maintaining a professional relationship with graduate student employees. Simply allowing the right to collectively bargain, if students so choose, as dictated in MD SB521, seems incremental progress in a forward-thinking direction in this regard. Thanks to the Committee for consideration of MD SB521.

Sincerely,

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