

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,

I am extremely concerned by the lack of bargaining rights for graduate students. The work we do is essential, especially during COVID. TAs are often the only people able to give students individual support and learning accommodations that make UMD College Park such a successful school. Even though TAs are essential, our position is very precarious. Though I love my job, I'm very aware that it would take just one manipulative professor to force me to work more hours that I'm contractually obligated to. If that were the case, I would need bargaining power to get my proper compensation. Wage stagnation is also a major concern for me. My wage is just barely livable, and I'm worried about the cost of living increasing over the next 5 years I'm in College Park due to gentrification. I love this school, but I came under the pretense that I would get a degree without debt. If I had to choose between continuing a degree at a deficit or getting a more lucrative job in industry, the choice would be simple. In conclusion, collective bargaining rights would make my sense of security, both economic and emotional, much more concrete.

Sincerely,

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