

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

SB 118
Supporting

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

I am writing to urge your support for SB0118. I am currently PhD student in the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Science and have worked as both a Research and Teaching Assistant at the University of Maryland.

Graduate students are an essential part of the UMD school system. Without our role as TAs and RAs, teaching and research would be impossible at the university level. We spend countless hours and sacrifice our physical and mental health for the furthering of academic research and for teaching the next generation of scientists, business people, artists, and more. Yet, our wages are barely above the minimum wage in Maryland. Considering the greater DC area has one of the highest costs of living of the entire US, this is simply unacceptable.

Graduate students are workers, and, as with any other fair workplace, we deserve a voice and fair compensation. If our state government cares about our education system or if they care about the quality of life of the working class, they will grant collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Joseph Knisely
Research Assistant, AOSC
University of Maryland, College Park
6012 Westchester Park Dr, College Park, Maryland 20740
jknisely@umd.edu