

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Gannon Sprinkle, Student Liaison for the City of College Park
HB 493
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
February 9, 2024**

FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the House Appropriations Committee,

My name is Gannon Sprinkle and I am a student liaison for the City of College Park. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to this Bill. The state already grants the right of collective bargaining towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our four-year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to all higher ed workers in Maryland.

I sit in city council meetings each week, as well as working in multiple subcommittee meetings each week. In all of these, I am a student representative. A minority population within the City of College Park, it is mine and my colleague's job to advocate for the rights and opinions of students within a legislative body. And that is what I am here to do today. Graduate students, like every other labor group, deserve the right to collectively bargain. The right to organize is a human right, and legislative bodies like yours must be conducive to unionizing and labor organizing. It is only when the state's legislative body is proactive, productive, and favorable of union activity that the state will truly work for the worker, help them claim living wages and fair working conditions. Job stability and fair wages are fights that move past equity issues. These impact every single resident of Maryland, beyond partisan lines. Worker rights are not something to be thrown aside, and it is with these views in mine that I request the right to collectively bargain to promote democracy in our workplaces and public institutions. I urge the committee to allow the ability to work together to construct conditions in our workplaces, and pass a favorable report on this bill.

Sincerely,
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*This testimony has been submitted on behalf of this individual by the University of Maryland Graduate Labor Union (GLU) and the Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (UMD AAUP).
Please contact us at mail@umdgradworkers.org or umdaaup@gmail.com if you have any questions.*