

**Written Testimony Submitted to the  
Maryland House Appropriations Committee  
By William Anderson, Graduate Assistant  
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 William Anderson and I am a Graduate Assistant at UMCP, where I have worked for this school year. 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 work in administrative support and my tasks vary widely day to day. I support my department in both undergraduate and graduate studies. I have worked in benchmarking, communications, surveys, and data analysis for the department. I have been fortunate to have excellent supervisors, but my associates have not always been as lucky.

Many of my fellow graduate assistants have experienced difficulty even obtaining a position. Many times, it seems as if the decisions being made are arbitrary and there is no transparency. One student will be told one thing and another will be told an entirely different story when it comes to acquiring a GA position. Supervisors themselves vary widely. Some require hardly any work and some require much more than the 10 hours we are contracted for. TAs have to deal with verbal and occasionally, physical, abuse from students as they work to help professors with teaching and grading.

Members of the Committee, This state has for decades viewed collective bargaining between state employees and management as the best way to promote democracy in our workplaces and public institutions. The right to collective bargaining has long been recognized as not only a fundamental human right, but also as the best method of ensuring that employee voices play a vital role in constructing conditions that govern our workplaces. It is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the nation, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt four-year public higher ed institutions from this path make no sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to this Bill.

Sincerely,  
William Anderson, Graduate Assistant  
School of Public Policy  
University of Maryland, College Park  
7901 Regents Drive, College Park, MD 20740  
wja@umd.edu

*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](mailto:mail@umdgradworkers.org) or [umdaaup@gmail.com](mailto:umdaaup@gmail.com) if you have any questions.*