

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Sarah Fouts, Assistant Professor
SB0823**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty, Part-Time Faculty, and Graduate Assistants
March 7, 2024
FAVORABLE**

Dear Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Sarah Fouts and I am an Assistant Professor at UMBC, where I have worked for 5.5 years. 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.

Collective bargaining rights for faculty and graduate students in Maryland are crucial for fostering a fair and equitable academic environment. The academic landscape relies heavily on the dedication and expertise of educators, including contingent faculty and graduate students, who play pivotal roles in shaping the learning experience.

Supporting collective bargaining rights is an affirmation of the value we place on the contributions of all educators. Contingent faculty, often employed on a temporary basis, deserve fair wages, job security, and a voice in decision-making processes. Collective bargaining provides a structured platform for negotiating terms and conditions that ensure the well-being of these educators, thereby enhancing the overall quality of education.

Moreover, graduate students, who are integral to the research and teaching missions of universities, deserve a collective voice to address concerns related to stipends, working conditions, and access to resources. By recognizing their right to collective bargaining, we empower graduate students to advocate for fair treatment and create a supportive academic environment conducive to their intellectual and professional growth.

Collective bargaining rights for faculty and graduate students in Maryland are not only about fair compensation but also about fostering an inclusive and collaborative educational community that values the diverse contributions of all its members. It is a step towards creating a sustainable and enriching academic environment that benefits both educators and students alike.

Sincerely,

Sarah Fouts, Assistant Professor
Department of American Studies
University of Maryland, Baltimore County
7901 Regents Drive, College Park, MD 20740
sarahbfouts@gmail.com

*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 info@umdgradworkers.org or umdaaup@gmail.com if you have any questions.*