

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee**

By Natalie McGartland

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 Natalie McGartland and I am a PhD candidate, Graduate Assistant, and Instructor of Record at UMD College Park, where I have worked for four 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.

As a PhD candidate, my contract dictates that I get paid to teach. Not TA. I teach my own classes, every semester. On top of that, I serve on department and university committees, work as staff in a makerspace on campus, and advise students. I have health insurance through the university as an employee of the state. I'm currently pregnant, and when I give birth in September, I won't be eligible for parental leave. The university expects me to either return to work immediately, or take a leave of absence without pay, which will force me to lose my health insurance. As a "student" I'm not eligible for FMLA. Collective bargaining rights are necessary to right this absurd injustice for the workers of the university of Maryland.

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