

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Jade Olson, Associate Clinical 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 Jade Olson and I am an associate clinical professor at the University of Maryland - College Park, where I have worked for 14 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to this Bill. The state already grants this right 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 the rest of higher education in Maryland.

As a full-time contingent (professional track or "PTK") faculty member, I teach 8-10 courses per year and complete an extensive amount of service to my department, college, and to the university as a whole. The approximately 3,400 PTK faculty at the University of Maryland - College Park teach about 70% of the credit hours on our campus. My teaching workload is twice what a typical tenured or tenure-track faculty member is assigned. It has taken several years for me to get to a point where this is my sole institutional appointment. For many years, I was unable to count on adequate course assignments at the University of Maryland and relied on teaching on an ad hoc basis at other schools in order to make ends meet. This is not an unusual situation; many of my colleagues currently teach at 2-3 different institutions.

PTK faculty like me face a wide variety of working conditions, many of which are inequitable. Some departments properly enforce university policies on appointment and evaluation, but others do not. Contingent faculty members' contracts are violated with little or no accountability. We often learn about our teaching assignments days or weeks in advance, making it difficult to plan financially and to prepare a robust curriculum. In many cases, PTK faculty do not have access to office spaces where we can do our work and meet with students; little or no support is available to purchase books, present our research at conferences, or to engage in professional development opportunities. Most faculty in my role either have a semester- or year-long contracts. Collective bargaining would reduce this precarity, making us more effective educators.

Enacting this Bill would create greater stability, equity, and transparency for Maryland's higher education workers like me. Our state has long viewed collective bargaining as the best way to ensure shared governance. It is a right already granted to workers at many institutions of higher education in our state, both public and private. For these reasons, I call for a favorable report to the 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 info@umdgradworkers.org or umdaaup@gmail.com if you have any questions.*