

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Chiara Graf, 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 Chiara Graf and I am an Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Maryland College Park, where I have worked for 2 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.

I teach four courses per year at UMD, some of which have almost 200 students enrolled. I love every minute of teaching, and I believe it is incredibly valuable work. I am especially proud when I am able to expose students for the first time to texts that I love--literature that is beautiful, moving, compassionate, and exciting. I know I am making a difference when a science major tells me that taking my class has shown them how interesting the humanities can be. But I am worried about the ways in which the humanities are being undervalued and defunded. I want a union because I think it's my best shot at fighting for a field that matters so much to me.

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.*