

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Louiqa Raschid, Dean's 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 Louiqa Raschid. I am a Dean's Professor at the University of Maryland where I hold appointments across several Colleges. I have been at Maryland for over three decades. I call on this committee to grant 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 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education workers in Maryland.

I will highlight several circumstances that I have personally experienced or witnessed, that have resulted in inequity, frustration and despair among our faculty and graduate students. Collective bargaining is an opportunity to provide us with the rights to address these challenges and will lead to a better university.

The first issue is gross salary inequity across various units of campus. I have been a leader of multi-disciplinary research teams and I work with faculty and graduate students across units. I have first hand experience of colleagues who provide the same high quality of research but whose compensation can differ significantly. While market forces cannot be eliminated, collective bargaining will provide faculty with better tools for negotiation.

The second issue is salary inversion which also occurs across many units. There are many senior and productive full professors who are sometimes paid less than the incoming junior assistant professors that they recruit and mentor. Again collective bargaining will help level these inequities.

I have mentored and employed graduate students for many decades. One of my greatest achievements has been mentoring these young scholars and helping them to deliver high quality research output while facing major life challenges - giving birth, taking care of their children, or facing serious health challenges, etc. These scholars are at the mercy of a system that provides them with zero benefits during these periods. A scholar who does not have a caring and creative mentor is destined to fail or struggle. Collective bargaining will provide a tool to create better conditions for these valuable members of our campus.

The final situation concerns Professional Track (PTK) or other Adjunct or Part-Time faculty. While serving on the Executive Board of UMD AAUP, I have learned about the sometimes horrifying circumstances in which they work. This can range from the lack of an employment contract despite years of working in the same position, to not having any recourse when the terms of the contract are blatantly violated. There are few other professions / sectors where professionals may face such often hostile work environments and unfortunately may not have any means to correct the situation. Collective bargaining will provide a range of tools to address these injustices.

Members of 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 4-year public higher ed institutions from this path make no sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to this 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.*