

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

By Anli Peng

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 Anli Peng. Our department doesn't have money to pay for teaching assistants, so the student research assistants volunteer to work as TAs without payment. Like me, I taught master's course each fall semester, with 15 students in each class. The teaching load for master's courses is heavy, as we need to design course materials, teach for 3 hours each week, offer office hours, write for assignment templates (a lot!!!), lead class discussions, and review class feedback each week. The teaching load occupies the research time (we also need to serve 20 hours for research each week as research assistants). Our RA contract will not specifically state the exact hours for research and teaching. It is very common to have an overload.

I really hope the state can increase the salary basis to ensure our right for study and work. It is really hard for phd students to handle study, research and teaching in our limited time with a poor salary of 1000 bi-week. I hope the bill can recognize our contribution to the university and recognize our labor value.

Members of the 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 four-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@umgradworkers.org or umdaaup@gmail.com if you have any questions.