

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Nina Randazzo, Assistant research scientist
HB0661**

**State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty
March 4, 2025
FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the House Appropriations Committee,

My name is Nina Randazzo, and I am an assistant research scientist at University of Maryland's Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center (ESSIC). 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. My colleagues and I research the use of satellite data to monitor carbon emissions. This work helps us to identify emissions sources for which society does not already have extensive data: methane emissions from landfills or from natural gas infrastructure in urban areas, or carbon dioxide emissions from major traffic corridors. This data will allow legislators such as yourselves to construct more effective emissions mitigation policies and, importantly, to monitor how well your policies are working. We face several challenges in our work that could be alleviated through the right of collective bargaining. We are professional track faculty and are therefore ineligible for tenure, and our contracts are often constructed on a year-to-year basis. Greater job security would allow us to plan more extensive research projects, which can span years. Further, many of us (such as myself) operate on cooperative agreements through federal agencies such as NASA and NOAA. As the federal executive branch attacks climate science, we want to ensure that the University of Maryland will protect our academic freedom so that we can continue our crucial research. Collective bargaining would allow us to negotiate greater protections on this front. For the above reasons, and with solidarity with other researchers, professors, and lecturers who do the important work of creating knowledge and training the next generation of critical thinkers, I 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 United Academics of Maryland.