

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee
By Bayley Marquez, Assistant Professor
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 Bayley Marquez and I am an assistant professor, and employed full time on the tenure track at the University of Maryland, College Park where I have worked for 5.5 years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report on 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 education workers in Maryland.

As a tenure track faculty member, I teach one to two courses a semester with approximately 25 undergraduates per class or 5-15 graduate students per class. I teach a number of courses that are part of the general education curriculum including many that address issues of diversity and equity. I also spend my time advising PhD students and directing the graduate program in my department as of this year.

As a tenure track faculty member, I have been involved in shared governance including serving as a department member on the university senate. I have not found representation on the faculty senate to meaningfully affect aspects of my workload or to truly represent my interests on campus. During my service the senate primarily voted on the renaming of new academic programs and policies on final exams. Additionally, the university senate is an advisory body only. This means when the university senate votes they are advising the university president of their vote but the president does not have to follow the senate's recommendation. A faculty union will provide far more assistance to faculty members to negotiate with the campus administration and provide support for faculty beyond making recommendations. A faculty union will give faculty like me a true voice in shared governance.

I am particularly worried about attacks on higher education and academic freedom and how this may affect my work. As faculty in the humanities, I worry about my ability to teach and publish about my research topics without political interference. My department in particular offers a large number of general education courses, and I worry about political interference in general education and the effect it will have on small departments like mine. I believe that a faculty union would help with these issues. Unions have been shown to be some of the staunchest advocates for academic freedom and pushing back against political interference in education. Unions also can be an important ally in the fight to preserve higher education institutions.

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 United Academics of Maryland.