

**Written Testimony Submitted to the  
Maryland House Appropriations Committee  
By Amy Wickner, Electronic Records Archivist  
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 Amy Wickner. I'm an archivist and faculty librarian with permanent status at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I've worked for more than 10 years. Specifically, my job is to preserve digital records. Like all of my librarian colleagues, I'm also a researcher. My area of expertise is climate advocacy in the archives field.

I share four major concerns with my coworkers: safe and sufficient staffing; maintenance of work environments; working conditions of adjuncts; and protection for DEIA activities under attack. I'll explain how collective bargaining would make a difference in each of these areas.

A collectively bargained faculty contract could stipulate staffing minimums for academic programs and functions. For example: manageable course loads for faculty who teach, well-staffed research administration in the colleges, and enough archivists to keep the reading room open longer and retrieve boxes on call. With guaranteed staffing levels, we'd be able to do our jobs without ruining our health. We wouldn't tolerate workplace harassment out of fear that a salary line would be lost.

A collectively bargained faculty contract would establish clear and fair terms of employment for my adjunct and contract colleagues, ending the exploitative precarity that's typical of such jobs.

Through collective bargaining, we could achieve safe, sustainably retrofitted, and well-maintained working environments. We could bargain safety measures to protect workers from sick or dangerous buildings, and from hazards related to climate change such as extreme weather. I want a contract that prohibits my employer from dangerously neglecting its physical plant.

A collectively bargained contract could enshrine material commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Amid right-wing attacks on higher and public education through universities, K-12 schools, libraries, and the very infrastructure of federal government, public higher ed workers are uniting for mutual aid and defense. Collective bargaining rights solidify our power to protect one another in this necessary work.

The Senate President and university administrators say that shared governance and faculty status are enough for public higher ed faculty to have our say. We're here to break the news that shared governance is only a say. It's just words. For example, the University Senate has no oversight over the university budget. At the college level, shared governance bodies don't vote on budgets, facility plans, or allocations of personnel. I agree with my colleagues that shared governance and faculty status are pointless without collective bargaining rights.

Members of the Committee, I urge you to issue a favorable report for this bill that extends

the right to collectively bargain to all higher education workers in Maryland. We know how to build democratic workplaces and public institutions, and we demand the tools to do so.

Sincerely,

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*This testimony has been submitted on behalf of this individual by the United Academics of Maryland.*