

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Appropriations Committee**

By Patricia Cossard, Librarian Faculty

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 Patricia Kosco Cossard and I am a Librarian Faculty at the Flagship University, University of Maryland where I have worked since 2000. 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 state employees in Higher Education.

A subject specialist, collection manager, and archivist for over forty years, I have network with educators, archivists, librarians, museum curators, students, and Indigenous community members in Maryland. I am successful project management and funding administration, including the award-winning Team Maryland in the 2007, 2011, and 2017 US Department of Energy Solar Decathlon. I am a manager state-line funds of collections, staffing, and students with an accumulated value of \$300M+. I have brought to the University of Maryland a combined portfolio over \$1.5M in external funding for multiple multiyear interdisciplinary projects with a combined portfolio over \$1.5M.

Some details about why you support this bill. I support this bill because Faculty Librarians historically are underpaid compared to other campus Faculty. Enacting this bill into law will resolve multiple issues including working conditions (salary, class size, control over curriculum, workload, job stability), racial and gender equity issues, governance, effects on student education, the prosperity of Maryland and Marylanders. Moreover, collective bargaining has the advantage of helping to reverse attacks on higher education by allowing faculty an independent collective voice.

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.