

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

**By Anna Rose Nelson, Lecturer**

**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 Anna Rose Nelson, and I am a lecturer of music theory at the University of Maryland-College Park, where I have worked for two years. As a lecturer, I am not eligible for tenure at any point--my contracts last for three 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 lecturer, my job responsibilities are focused on teaching, and indeed, I teach more credit hours and more students than my tenured or tenure-track colleagues do. I love to teach --my students make this all worth it--but it is a difficult and trying profession. Lecturers are treated relatively well here at UMD (as compared to other institutions I've seen), but it is still a fact that lecturers are treated as dispensable, despite being the main source of teaching power on campus. I teach three classes per term (TT faculty teach one or two); my classes are all enrolled to or past capacity; and I have no teaching support or TA help.

Furthermore, lecturers often find themselves stuck under this intense teaching load for a very long time, leading to high rates of burnout. Lecturers receive no support for research, despite a robust research portfolio being the main ticket to career advancement. This leads to a situation where lecturers have no ability to improve their working conditions, continue teaching heavy loads to make ends meet, and both teacher and student suffer. To make matters worse, the "lecturer"/ "PTK" / "clinical professor" tracks here are very confusing and hard to navigate, which leads to more confusion and distress. My own job title, for example, has changed three times since arriving here at UMD in August 2023 due to "administrative issues," and the outcome has been that I have effectively been demoted without cause other than administrative error, with no recourse or place to turn for help.

A union of supportive colleagues who have access to institutional knowledge and the ability to intervene in negotiations about job titles, class sizes, teaching load, and research and other resources would help me greatly. Without the stress of navigating a system meant to keep low-wage workers in their roles, I would have more time to devote to teaching and service to the school and the academic community at large. I would have recourse when denied basic needs without cause, and I would have a way to communicate with administrators who refuse to answer emails or meet with lecturers.

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.*