

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Ben Barnes, Chair  
The Honorable Mark Chang, Vice Chair  
Appropriations Committee  
Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Testimony of Ray Baker on  
HB661 – State Personnel Collective Bargaining Faculty  
Position: FAVORABLE**

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and committee, I write in support of HB 661 as it would provide collective bargaining to faculty at four-year universities in the University of Maryland system. Collective bargaining would ensure educators have the same collective bargaining and worker rights as other state employees. This is more vital than ever given the current Presidential administration and its infringement on rights and free speech. Faculty deserve to have codified protections that a collective bargaining agreement provides all workers.

This bill is enabling legislation and should be considered as such. Academic pursuit is one of inquiry and intellectual opportunity. Workers in academic spaces deserve the opportunity to unionize if they so choose. Questions about the cost of unionization are best decided at the negotiation table and not in the political space that seeks to limit and restrict the voice of workers. As ardent defendants of democracy, it appears to be a betrayal of those values to deny others the opportunity for workplace democracy.

Professors may have once been considered a job classification beyond the plight of traditional workers. While that has never been the case, the fallacy of that position is stronger now more than ever. Given the federal political climate now is the time to ensure collective bargaining rights for faculty. I urge a favorable report on this bill.

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