

House Bill 661 /Senate Bill 750
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty
House Appropriations Committee / Senate Finance Committee
February 20, 2024

Letter of Information

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share St. Mary's College of Maryland's analysis of Senate Bill 750.

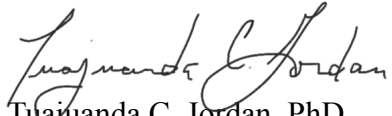
In general, this bill would extend collective bargaining rights to full- and part-time faculty at the College. It would also establish separate collective bargaining units for contingent, contractual, and temporary faculty – although these units would also be authorized to combine into a single entity. In our assessment, this bill would materially alter the existing deliberative, collaborative, and collegial process of shared governance by which our institutional decisions are made.

The College's current model of shared governance has historically functioned well, and continues to function well today, as a mechanism which requires all stakeholders to focus on the best interests of our students and the College's long-term success. Recent achievements of our existing shared governance model include the innovative restructuring of existing academic programming, as well as the development of our core LEAD (Learning through Experiential and Applied Discovery) curriculum. Shared governance is also responsible for the development of two of our most successful new academic programs, Marine Science and Business Administration, which have been so popular among new students that they have become our second and third most popular majors within just two years of their initial launch.

The realignment and development of academic programming is challenging, yet essential, for the College to remain competitive and relevant to the needs of Maryland's students and economy. However, the current shared governance structure enables us to make these critical academic decisions in a timely and equitable manner. Additionally, Faculty Bylaws concerning work-place conditions are routinely examined and updated through the shared governance process to ensure that any and all faculty members have a forum to voice their concerns or requests in real-time.

St. Mary's College of Maryland remains committed to offering a premier liberal arts education that is both affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of Maryland students. We also remain committed to continuing our long tradition of productive and collaborative relationships with

both faculty and staff to address both programmatic and workplace needs through existing processes. Thank you for your consideration and continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tuajuanda C. Jordan".

Tuajuanda C. Jordan, PhD

President