

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Ariana Nadia Nash, Non-tenure track Lecturer
SB0750
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Faculty
February 20, 2025
FAVORABLE**

Good afternoon Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Senate Finance Committee.

My name is Ariana Nadia Nash and I am a full-time non-tenure-track lecturer in the English department at the University of Maryland College Park, where I have worked for two years. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report on this Bill and undo the injustice of depriving Maryland faculty of the right to collectively organize. Given that the state has already acknowledged the rights of other state employees, including faculty at community colleges and the non-academic workforce on our campuses, it is clear that the state should no longer delay extending this right to all higher education workers in Maryland. Most semesters I teach around ninety students in four classes. I give each of these students personal attention, in class, in my office hours, in my written feedback on anywhere from eight to thirteen written assignments each semester. It is a grueling amount of work--which I happen to love--but I am underpaid for it, so much so that my husband and my shared salaries do not give us and our two children what MIT calculates to be a living wage for Washington DC. The degree to which my salary is low is highlighted by the comparison to tenure-track faculty, who make two and three times what I do for teaching far fewer classes, often with the support of teaching assistants and professional development grants, and other forms of institutional aid. We should have the right collectively as faculty to sit down with our employers and come up with tenable ways to close this gap and compensate me and my non-tenure-track colleagues fairly. While faculty like myself have some representation in institutions of shared governance, it is more minimal than tenured faculty and also more difficult to engage with given that participation in such processes is not compensated and lies outside of the terms of my job. Tenured faculty, on the other hand, are given low course loads in part because this kind of service is expected of them and factored into their workload. However, for all faculty, non-tenure-track and tenure-track alike, this shared governance is minimal, and does not cover those topics traditionally addressed by collective bargaining, like wages, benefits, and promotion. The right to organize gives faculty the opportunity to address these issues with employers, and to do so collectively, among ourselves and in negotiation with university administrators. I have been a part of two different previous organizations of higher education workers, both of which led to greater job stability and satisfaction among those workers. It reduced turnover, increased parity and inclusiveness, and improved education. Not only faculty but also students suffer when faculty are overworked and underpaid. In these troubling times, every legislature should be promoting democratic structures, particularly in public institutions. That the state of Maryland denies any of its public employees the right to negotiate with management deprives workers of their rights and sends a message that individual rights can be denied for no legitimate reason. I again therefore call for a favorable report to this Bill and the end to the injustice of denying state employees their rights within their workplaces.

Sincerely,

Ariana Nadia Nash, Non-tenure track Lecturer
Home Campus: University of Maryland, College Park
English Department

University of Maryland, College Park
7901 Regents Drive, College Park, MD 20740
ariana.nadia.nash@gmail.com

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