

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
By Mauro Resmini, Associate Professor
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 Mauro Resmini and I am Associate Professor of Cinema and Media Studies and Italian at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have worked for 10 years, first as a part-time contingent faculty, and then as tenure-track--and now tenured--faculty. I call on this committee to issue a favorable report to this bill. The state already grants this right towards nearly every other state employee, as well as the faculty at our community colleges and the non-academic workforce at our 4 year institutions. It is clear that this right should be extended to the rest of higher education in Maryland.

There are 3,392 full time and over 900 part time contingent faculty at UMD (versus 1,399 tenured and tenure-track faculty). The working conditions of contingent faculty are precarious and their duties liable to change without notice, entirely exposed as they are to the whims of department chairs. And yet, the department to which I am primarily affiliated (the School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures) would simply not be able to function--both at the level of teaching and advising--without their underpaid, precarious labor.

From 2014 to 2022, UMD saw the number of tenure-track and tenured faculty fall by 6.9%, and the number of contingent faculty increase by 19.3% in that same eight-year span. It is clear that this process of deliberate, structural "adjunctification" at UMD allows the university to rely on cheap, precarious labor whose demands can be more easily silenced or outright ignored (as it has been the case with the meet-and-confer process put in place by university administration in 2010). The proposed bill, if turned into law, would offer the opportunity to change this untenable situation. On the other hand, the shrinking of tenure-track and tenured faculty has also been accompanied by a persistent disparity between UMD salaries and its peers'. COLA-adjusted salaries for tenured and tenure-track faculty are the second lowest among UMD's peers (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and Ohio State University, for instance, offer salaries that are 58% and 48% higher than UMD, respectively). Passage of SB 247 may or may not lead to unionization, but it sets the stage for a democratic process in which university workers can engage in open debate and make an informed decision. The proposed bill, if enacted into law, would offer the opportunity to significantly improve working conditions for all workers in the UM System, from graduate students to contingent faculty, to tenured and tenure-track faculty.

Members of the committee, the right to collective bargaining is a right granted to many other public higher ed institutions in the county, and indeed to many private, prestigious institutions in our own state. The reasons to exempt 4-year public institutions from this path just no longer make sense. I again therefore call for a favorable report to this bill.
Sincerely,

Mauro Resmini, Associate Professor
School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures
University of Maryland, College Park
mauro.resmini@gmail.com

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

