

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
SB0006**

State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty

February 05, 2026

FAVORABLE

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

My name is Irene Pasquetto. I am a tenure-track professor in the College of Information at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a member of United Academics of Maryland-University of Maryland (UAM), affiliated with the AAUP and AFT. I am asking you to support collective bargaining rights for faculty at Maryland's public four-year institutions. Since joining UMD in 2024, I have been struck by the fact that faculty are among the very few Maryland public employees who lack this fundamental workplace right. Also, I worked in a number of other US universities before UMD, and faculty did have bargaining rights in each one of them.

UMD non-tenure-track faculty are particularly vulnerable. In my department and across campus, lecturers, adjuncts, PTK instructors, and research faculty teach core courses, staff large classes and labs, mentor students, and sustain research programs. Many carry workloads comparable to tenure-track faculty, yet work on short-term or part-time contracts with little job security. They are often excluded from shared governance and face arbitrary workload assignments, last-minute changes to teaching responsibilities, delayed appointment letters, unclear evaluation procedures, and inconsistent communication from administrators. These conditions undermine both faculty stability and student learning, even as these colleagues continue to demonstrate extraordinary dedication to their students and the university.

Tenure-track faculty also need collective bargaining. Tenure-track status does not eliminate vulnerability, particularly in the current political climate, where academic freedom and scholarly independence are increasingly under pressure. Faculty face opaque evaluation standards, shifting expectations, and limited protections against unilateral administrative decisions affecting workload, compensation, and access to research resources. Shared governance, while important, is advisory and insufficient: faculty recommendations are frequently overridden, and core employment conditions--such as pay, workload norms, and due process--remain outside its scope. Final authority rests with senior administrators, often without meaningful faculty input on the resources required to teach and conduct research effectively.

Faculty are essential to the University of Maryland's public mission. We educate and support students, engage with communities, conduct research that benefits the state, and train Maryland's future workforce. Non-tenure-track faculty are critical to the university's daily operations, while tenure-track faculty sustain long-term research and public partnerships. Because faculty labor underwrites the university's success, fair and stable working conditions are a matter of public interest. Granting collective bargaining rights--already afforded to most Maryland public employees and many peer institutions--will ensure faculty have a meaningful voice, strengthen accountability, and support the long-term vitality of Maryland's public universities.

Sincerely,

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