



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

Affiliated with the National AFL-CIO

Donna S. Edwards
President

Samuel Epps, IV
Secretary-Treasurer

📞 410.280.2233

📠 410.280.2956

📍 7 School Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2096

SB 6 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty

Senate Finance Committee

February 5, 2026

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 6 with the Sponsor's amendments to grant Nontenure Track faculty at the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland the right to collective bargaining. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

Nontenure track faculty have been organizing for more than a decade to secure the same basic workplace rights that thousands of public employees in Maryland already exercise. Yet, Maryland law continues to deny them the freedom to form and join a union of their choice. SB 6 corrects this injustice by extending collective bargaining rights to the educators who teach the majority of undergraduate courses, mentor students, conduct research, and sustain the academic mission of our public institutions.

Nontenure-track faculty or contingent faculty now teach 49% of the more than 1.5 million undergraduate classes taught each term at U.S. public colleges and universities.¹ They are essential to student success. They design and teach courses, provide mentorship, support student research, and help students navigate academic and personal challenges. When nontenure track faculty and administrators can negotiate fair salaries, benefits, and working conditions, institutions become more stable, equitable, and better able to serve students.

Maryland is currently an outlier. Across the country, collective bargaining for faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) is well established. A 2024 report from the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions found:

- **402,217 faculty nationwide are unionized**, representing nearly one in four faculty members.
- **775 faculty bargaining units** exist at public and private institutions.

¹ "Reversing Course: The Troubled State of Academic Staffing and a Path Forward." JBL Associates Inc.





MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

Affiliated with the National AFL-CIO

Donna S. Edwards
President

Samuel Epps, IV
Secretary-Treasurer

📞 410.280.2233

📠 410.280.2956

📍 7 School Street
Annapolis, MD 21401-2096

- **2/3 of all faculty units at private four-year institutions are exclusively NTT units,** demonstrating how common NTT unionization is.
- **Maryland ranks second-lowest in the nation in faculty unionization,** with only 8.5% or 2,941 faculty represented.²

Maryland has already recognized the value of collective bargaining in higher education. In 2021, the General Assembly expanded bargaining rights to community college faculty and staff. Today, 10 higher education institutions in Maryland have unionized faculty or part-time faculty. SB 6 simply brings the USM, Morgan State, and St Mary's in line with the rest of the state and nation.

The "meet and confer" process simply does not work and is not a substitute for collective bargaining. Shared governance, co-governance, and faculty senates do not grant workers legal rights. The only way for employees to collectively and effectively work with higher education institutions to improve working conditions is by having the freedom to exercise their right to form and join a union of their choice.

As we strongly support SB 6, we also respectfully request an amendment to ensure that the bill does not disrupt any already existing bargaining units, preserving the stability and integrity of current collective bargaining structures while extending rights to nontenure-track faculty.

The requested amendment is as follows:

Pg. 3, beginning at line 18 -

Replace existing language in (H) with:

*(H)(1) "NONTENURE TRACK FACULTY" MEANS FULL-TIME, PART-TIME, OR ADJUNCT NONTENURE TRACK **EMPLOYEE** OF A SYSTEM INSTITUTION, MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, OR ST. MARY'S COLLEGE OF MARYLAND, WHOSE **PRIMARY** ASSIGNMENTS INVOLVE ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITIES.*

Maryland's public colleges and universities rely on the dedication, expertise, and labor of nontenure-track faculty every day. It is long past time that our state grants them the same rights and protections afforded to thousands of their peers across the country.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 6 with the Sponsor's amendments.

² 2024 Directory of Bargaining Agents and Contracts in Institutions of Higher Education." William A. Herbert, Jacob Apkarian, Joseph van der Naald. Sept. 2024.

