

**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 Dr. Samantha McDonald.

I am a non-tenure-track (PTK) faculty professor of Information at University of Maryland, College Park. I was born and raised in Maryland; I went to primary school in Baltimore County and attended UMBC for my undergraduate degree.

As a new faculty member, I recently learned that I am one of only very few Maryland public employees without collective bargaining rights for faculty. Unions are the backbone of good economic policy. We need people to represent us and defend our rights in matters of employment.

Non-tenure track faculty are also the most vulnerable. I only started teaching this past Fall, but I am already teaching three courses at UMD, with over 300 students per semester.

I was given no teaching support or training, only a copy of slides and syllabus from previous professors. I have never taught the course content before. Despite having multiple other professors teaching the same course, there was no effort to support cross-section collaboration as well, or even assure I was teaching the same content as other professors.

In addition, none of my TAs have any training in teaching or grading. Training TAs to be professional teaching support lies solely on me, and I have to do so while simultaneously managing hundreds of other students in my courses.

If it wasn't for my experience teaching in graduate school, I honestly don't think I would have survived. I spent a month preparing like a full-time job before the semester began, and it still wasn't enough.

I was lucky to have that time to prepare. A new professor this semester was just given one of the same courses as me and only a few weeks to prepare. This is not OK, but we must accept it as new and vulnerable faculty.

In my first semester, I also joined a graduate thesis committees, joined the development of a new honors program, drafted a research paper, reviewed grants, and started the re-design of two different classes and their learning outcomes. I work much more than 40/hrs a week to stay on top of this, and I do so from my windowless office. I am sure I will be spending the summer prepping full-time, but I will not be paid for those summer months.

It is my opinion that one of the reasons why our department has one of the strongest research programs and grant funding awards in the U.S., is because the efforts of teaching and general school programming are relieved from many tenure-track faculty (TTK) and given to PTK faculty as a core focus. PTK faculty get to focus on being good teachers and good contributors to the school, while PTK faculty often focus on contributions to the field, mentorship, advising, lab management, and more.

The majority of faculty committee positions in our department are held by PTK as well. If PTK were to disappear from our department, the majority of expertise and management of most of the departments committees would disappear.

Strong universities depend on PTK faculty, yet we have no voice in governance - this is unsustainable. We need equal access to shared governance at the department, college, and/or university level. Please help the non-tenure-track faculty have the voice they deserve and provide us collective bargaining rights.

Sincerely,

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