

**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.

Testimony of the Maryland Catholic Labor Network In Support of Collective Bargaining Rights for Non-Tenure-Track Faculty in the University of Maryland System:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Maryland Catholic Labor Network in strong support of legislation extending collective bargaining rights to all non-tenure-track faculty in the University of Maryland system.

The Maryland Catholic Labor Network brings together Catholics across the state who believe that the dignity of work and the dignity of the worker are inseparable. From that moral framework, we urge you to advance this bill.

Non-tenure-track faculty are essential to the mission of Maryland's public universities. They teach a substantial share of undergraduate courses, mentor students, and carry out the day-to-day labor that allows institutions of higher education to function. Yet many of these educators work under conditions that are increasingly precarious and unjust: short-term contracts, low and unpredictable pay, limited access to benefits, minimal job security, and little to no voice in decisions that directly affect their livelihoods.

Despite holding advanced degrees and performing highly skilled labor, many non-tenure-track faculty are paid wages that require them to work multiple jobs, commute between campuses, or leave academia altogether. This instability harms not only workers, but students as well - undermining continuity, mentorship, and educational quality across the UMD system.

Catholic social teaching speaks clearly and consistently to this reality. The Church affirms that work is not merely a commodity, but a form of human participation in the common good. When workers are treated as disposable or denied a meaningful voice, their dignity is diminished. The Church also teaches that labor unions are not only permissible, but often necessary, to protect workers from exploitation and to secure just wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Pope after pope has affirmed that collective bargaining is a legitimate and vital means by which workers defend their dignity and participate more fully in shaping a just society. Denying non-tenure-track faculty the right to organize and bargain collectively places them in a structurally unequal position - one that contradicts both moral teaching and basic principles of fairness.

Extending collective bargaining rights to these faculty members will not harm Maryland's public universities. On the contrary, it will strengthen them by promoting stability, transparency, and shared responsibility. When educators are respected and supported, students benefit, institutions thrive, and the public investment in higher education yields stronger returns.

This legislation is a necessary step toward correcting a long-standing imbalance of power and addressing the growing precarity within academic labor. It aligns with Maryland's commitment

to worker justice, educational excellence, and the common good.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Labor Network respectfully urges a favorable report on this bill.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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