

**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 Melinda Baldwin. I am a tenured professor of history at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am working with my colleagues in United Academics of Maryland-University of Maryland (UAM), an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), to secure collective bargaining rights for faculty in Maryland's public four-year institutions. As a faculty member, I am one of only very few Maryland public employees without these rights.

While all faculty deserve collective bargaining rights, non-tenure-track faculty are among the most vulnerable. I am our department's associate chair and in that capacity I supervise PTK (professional track) faculty who teach many of our core survey courses and are responsible for educating hundreds of Maryland students per year. These professional track faculty are constantly being asked to change their course assignments or take on additional teaching to cover gaps, have less representation in shared governing bodies than tenure-track faculty, and have less job security. In spite of those challenges they are some of our most talented and productive employees, who care deeply about the experiences of students at the University of Maryland. We would be substantially worse off without them.

Non-tenure-track and tenure-track faculty alike need collective bargaining rights in order to protect academic freedom at a perilous moment for educators. There is a nationwide, coordinated effort to force out professors whose ideas contradict the conservative political mainstream. In Texas, a philosophy professor was directed to remove Plato from his syllabus because Plato discusses gender; in Oklahoma, a non-tenure-track instructor was fired for giving a poor grade to a science assignment that cited only the Bible as evidence. Although Maryland leaders have championed free speech, collective bargaining would be an added layer of security in the event of federal pressure or extended public harassment campaigns, particularly for more vulnerable untenured faculty members.

It has been my privilege to be part of Maryland's flagship university. The students in my courses are talented, dedicated, and deserve nothing less than a world-class education. Faculty cannot provide that world-class education if they are afraid they will lose their jobs for teaching their subjects. It is through the right to collectively bargain--a right afforded almost all other Maryland Public Employees and USM peer institutions--that non-tenure-track faculty, and, hopefully soon, all faculty, will have the voice they deserve.

Sincerely,

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