

**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 Keegan Cook Finberg. I am a tenure-track professor of English at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC). 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. I call on you to issue a favorable report on this bill.

As a faculty member, I am one of only very few Maryland public employees without these rights. I have been a resident of Maryland since 2018 when I moved to Baltimore to work at UMBC. Before that, I was a non-tenure track faculty member at several other institutions.

While all faculty deserve collective bargaining rights, only non-tenure-track faculty are included in this bill, and so I will discuss their particular need first. My non-tenure track colleagues perform the majority of the teaching at UMBC. They interact with our students more than any other faculty members, often teaching many large courses in the same semester. Despite this, they are very poorly paid (when there is a position open, I have been embarrassed to advertise it to my friends and acquaintances), they have minimal access to professional development funding, and their workload is subject to constant change. My non-tenure-track colleagues are some of the most dedicated educators I have encountered, and collective bargaining will allow UMBC to retain these professors and to treat them--and our students-- with dignity.

As a tenure-track faculty member, I have also found myself in need of collective bargaining rights. Our current shared governance is not a substitute for a union. It does not give us the level of administrative transparency that we need in order to weigh in on major decisions that affect our students and our institution. Furthermore, when faculty experience discrimination, lack of communication from administrators about expectations, and unclear evaluation procedures, there is no process within shared governance to address it. With collective bargaining rights we would be able to work to address the gender equity pay gaps that have dictated our working conditions for so long.

Before closing, I would like to address the issue of academic freedom. As we have seen across the country, shared faculty governance has been inadequate to address this, as when, in the wake of Gaza solidarity protests, the Columbia University administration acceded to a Trump administration demand to move student disciplinary panels away from the university senate and into the Provost's Office. While I trust that our administration has faculty and student best interests in mind, collective bargaining rights for faculty would strengthen their power to protect the values of all Marylanders.

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.

I ask for your support of this bill moving forward.

Sincerely,

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