

In Support of HB 106 – Extending Collective Bargaining Rights to Faculty

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Date: February 6, 2026

I am writing today to support HB 106, which extends collective bargaining rights to non-tenure track faculty within the University System of Maryland (USM). I am submitting this testimony as an individual faculty member, a member of the UMB Faculty Senate, and a member of the Council of University System Faculty (CUSF). CUSF has consistently supported collective bargaining rights for faculty, and yet the legislature has consistently denied this right.

USM is built on the principle of shared governance, intended to recognize faculty expertise on academic programming, research, and institutional functions and policies. In practice, faculty input is sought but is often disregarded. Collective bargaining provides an essential backup by ensuring faculty perspectives are heard and acted upon. Collective bargaining also promotes better transparency and accountability across the System.

Collective bargaining is about more than salaries. Since faculty compensation at USM is determined by the legislature and the governor, they retain authority over state spending. The true value of collective bargaining lies in improving University processes, respect for faculty expertise, and fairness. It establishes a formal structure that requires administrators to meaningfully consider faculty input on academic and workplace issues that directly affect educational quality, research, and institutional integrity.

Faculty are uniquely positioned to understand the needs of Maryland's public universities. We educate students, advance research, and sustain a research enterprise that serves as a vital economic engine for the state. Experiences at peer institutions in states such as New York demonstrate that faculty collective bargaining leads to more thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions, and stronger institutions. Extending collective bargaining rights would also improve USM's ability to recruit and retain faculty in a competitive national environment.

HB 106 offers a profound opportunity to strengthen shared governance, protect academic integrity, and improve decision-making across USM. I strongly urge support for HB 106, with amendments extending collective bargaining rights to all non-tenured faculty. Thank you for your consideration.

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