

HB 106
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

Letter of Information

Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share St. Mary's College of Maryland's analysis of HB 106 as introduced.

As drafted, this bill would extend collective bargaining rights to nontenure track faculty at USM institutions, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland. It would also establish a separate bargaining unit for nontenure track faculty from the existing bargaining units. In our assessment, this legislation would materially alter the existing deliberative, collaborative, and collegial process of shared governance through which our institutional decisions are currently made.

The College's current model of shared governance has historically functioned well, and continues to function well today, as a mechanism which requires all stakeholders to focus on the best interests of our students and the College's long-term success. Recent achievements of our existing shared governance model include the innovative restructuring of existing academic programming, as well as the development of our core LEAD (Learning through Experiential and Applied Discovery) curriculum. Shared governance is also responsible for the development of two of our most successful new academic programs, Marine Science and Business Administration, which have been so popular among new students that they have become two of our most popular majors within just a few years of their initial launch.

The realignment and development of academic programming is challenging, yet essential, for St. Mary's College to remain competitive and relevant to the needs of Maryland's students and economy. The current shared governance structure enables us to make these critical academic decisions in a timely and equitable manner. Additionally, Faculty Bylaws concerning work-place conditions are routinely examined and updated through the shared governance process to ensure that all faculty members have a forum to voice their concerns or requests in real-time.

St. Mary's College of Maryland remains committed to offering a premier liberal arts education that is both affordable and accessible to a broad spectrum of Maryland students. We also remain

committed to continuing our long tradition of productive and collaborative relationships with both faculty and staff to address both programmatic and workplace needs through existing processes.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rhonda G. Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "R".

Rhonda G. Phillips Ph.D., FAICP
President