Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Government, Labor and Elections Committee
HB0106
State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty
February 10, 2026
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr, and members of the House Government, Labor and Elections Committee.

My name is Zubin Jelveh. I am a tenure-track professor in the College of Information and Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park, where I have served since 2021. I am here today to support collective bargaining rights for faculty at Maryland's public four-year institutions.

I'm speaking from a straightforward principle: strong public institutions are essential to a strong state and a strong county, and strong institutions require clear rules, fair process, and accountability. Maryland taxpayers invest in this university to educate students, generate useful knowledge, and serve the public. That investment is best protected when expectations are transparent and applied consistently--not when employment conditions depend on informal practices that vary across units.

Non-tenure-track faculty are among the most exposed to uncertainty. They teach a substantial share of courses, mentor and advise students, and provide continuity that keeps programs functioning. Yet many face unpredictable workload expectations, unclear evaluation procedures, and short appointment timelines that make it hard to plan responsibly for family and finances. That kind of instability is not a recipe for excellence. It produces avoidable turnover and lost time--time that should be spent teaching and training Maryland's workforce.

Collective bargaining provides a rule-of-law framework: transparent standards, consistent procedures, and due process when disputes arise. It does not prevent administrators from managing; it supports effective management by making decisions more predictable and accountable. And it's not a fringe concept--it's familiar in public service, including in public safety. For example, the Fraternal Order of Police explicitly supports collective bargaining rights for public safety employees, and the International Association of Fire Fighters describes collective bargaining as the process used to set wages, hours, and working conditions through a contract. At the federal level, public-safety-related workforces like Border Patrol agents operate under negotiated collective bargaining agreements.

UMD is also a critical contributor to the private economy. We educate talent that employers depend on, and we produce research that becomes real-world innovation--tools, methods, and partnerships that strengthen productivity and competitiveness. When the university runs smoothly and retains excellent faculty, the private sector benefits directly through stronger graduates and more reliable pipelines into industry. Taxpayers deserve a clear return on investment: strong teaching, reliable programs, and job-ready graduates.

For these reasons, I urge you to support collective bargaining rights for faculty at Maryland's public four-year institutions. This is about dignity of work, responsible governance, and protecting a vital public asset--so the university can keep delivering results for students, families, employers, and taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Zubin Jelveh
zjelveh@gmail.com

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