

LINDA FOLEY
Legislative District 15
Montgomery County

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Chair, Non-Energy Utilities
Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony: HB106 - State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty

Committee: Government, Labor, and Elections

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Position: Favorable

Good afternoon, Chair Wells, Vice Chair Kerr and members of the Government, Labor, and Elections Committee. For the record, I'm Delegate Linda Foley and I'm presenting HB106 State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Nontenure Track Faculty.

HB106 extends collective bargaining rights to nontenure track faculty who work at the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College of Maryland. These academic workers, in addition to graduate assistants on which I have another bill, are the only significant group of state employees who are prohibited from having a union contract.

Before I enumerate the reasons these faculty members need and deserve collective bargaining, let me stress that this bill does not require UMD to raise salaries or increase benefits. The budget for the UMD system will be whatever budget we and the governor require the university system to have. In other words, this bill and collective bargaining rights for faculty does not increase the size of the pie, so to speak. What it does is provide workers, if they choose to unionize, a voice in how the pie is divided.

In 2021, the legislature voted to allow collective bargaining for professors and other academic workers at Maryland's community colleges. There's no reason for faculty and other academic workers at Maryland's 4-year public colleges and universities not to enjoy the same rights as their counterparts at community colleges.

In fact, some part-time faculty teaching at our community colleges teach the same courses at our 4-year schools.

In addition, several of Maryland's private colleges and universities have collective bargaining rights for full-time and part-time faculty, including Goucher College, McDaniel College, and the Maryland Institute College of Art.

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Twenty-five states and the District of Columbia allow faculty at four year public academic institutions to collectively bargain, including nearby states such as Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and even Ohio.

Nationwide, there are 517 institutions of higher education that have non tenure track bargaining units. These schools are located across thirty states and Washington, D.C. These institutions demonstrate the possibility of securing the rights for non-tenure track faculty.

The fiscal note acknowledges that the fiscal impact is limited and minimal, mostly operational expenses for reimbursing PERB. It also recognizes that any true financial change is difficult to identify as it is dependent on any negotiated contracts.

In other words, Universities may say that fiscal impact is the reason this bill should not pass, however the UMD system -- when given the opportunity by DLS to indicate what this fiscal impact may look like -- could not identify specific increases.

We all know that, in academia, evidence is critical for the acceptance of any thesis or claim. The faculty members, union representatives, and other stakeholders sitting before you today have the evidence to back up why this bill is needed. The Universities, on the other hand, offer fearful ideas as to why faculty at our esteemed institutions should not simply be granted the opportunity to have a union.

Witnesses for university system administrators no doubt will tell you how impossible it will be to recognize collective bargaining for its faculty. How it will destroy relationships that make our universities work, how it will affect academic excellence, that there are already procedures in place to address the concerns of faculty or that collective bargaining will drive up the costs of higher education at our schools. That is fake news.

You may also hear that faculty are already ranking the highest in terms of salaries of State employees. A recent Baltimore Sun report of the State's highest paid employees found that university employees were indeed in the top 10 -- but guess who they were: coaches, Deans, University Presidents, and the Chancellor, some of whom are making over a million dollars a year.

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Out of the full list in the report, 53% of the top 200 state salaries are administrators at our higher ed institutions, 9% are athletics-treated, and 17% are clinical faculty, such as surgeons, cardiologists, etc. who are practicing professionals. In total, these account for 79% of the reported list.

Don't be fooled, when you remove these categories, median salary for non-coaching, non-administrative faculty are closer to \$70,000 to \$80,000.

Yet, we have some of these top earning individuals or their representatives advocating against this bill. For a university system that touts itself as being fearless, the right decision would be to at the very least remain neutral on this bill.

The self-proclaimed "fearless" University System of Maryland should not be fearful of allowing their faculty a real voice at work with collective bargaining rights.

I urge a FAVORABLE report on HB106.