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 Elizabeth Juliana Par?-Blagoev, I am a full-time non-tenure-track professor of Education at The Johns Hopkins University and past president of the Hopkins Advocacy chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). I support legislation securing collective bargaining rights for faculty in Maryland's public four-year institutions. I live and work in Maryland and vote according to the belief that our laws must be supportive of labor rights.

I know that this legislation is not related to private university faculty. However, as a citizen of Maryland, I vote according to the believe that our laws must be supportive of labor rights. The higher education landscape is in turmoil right now. There is an incredibly mobile workforce of faculty candidates. I want Maryland public institutions to draw the best candidates possible. Ensuring collective bargaining for public school faculty can help to draw strong faculty from private institutions and / or from states with unfavorable higher education laws and policies.

Non-tenure-track faculty are a life blood of teaching and service in higher education, many also conduct research. To attract the strongest candidates in this time of upheaval in higher education, Maryland should ensure that faculty in public four-year institutions can collectively bargain.

My experience in the private university setting is not so dissimilar from that of my public school university faculty friends. Like many of them, I have no office, funding for the necessary work of designing a course has dwindled and workloads are increasing. Over the past 2 years I have had a doctoral advising load of more than 30 students along with teaching 6 courses each year.

Attracting and keeping the strongest faculty starts with ensuring working conditions are sustainable. The administration at my university has drastically increased faculty workload, like my advising load, "because they can." This means that it is a struggle to ensure students are effectively supported. Attracting and keeping the strongest faculty will help Maryland attract and keep the strongest students. Collective bargaining rights help ensure working conditions are sustainable - this helps Marylanders and can help attract the best to Maryland.

As a long-time elected officer of my faculty senate, it is clear that administration only listens to us when our by-laws give us a say in decision making rather than acting in an advisory capacity. Our opportunities to play a role in decision making are thus very limited. This situation is common as well in public universities that lack collective bargaining.

Higher education in America has been a beacon for students around the world since the post-WWII policies ensured government investment in university research. That relationship is being overwritten nationally by an administration that has declared that "the university is the enemy." I want to see our state build the strongest possible bulwarks such that a

Maryland public higher education experience is among the most sought after within the US and across the world.

Making this happen requires a strong labor force - and this requires that faculty have the right to collectively bargain. Think about what you want the college experience for our undergraduates and graduates to be - I know I want our students, my children included, to have an experience working with faculty who are not harried and over-worked, worried about making it through the month financially. I know colleagues in this situation - I am in this situation. I hold a doctorate from Harvard, I publish regularly and have thousands of citations, yet, as a single parent the reality of my finances are that I live month to month and have zero job stability. This legislation won't help me. But it could help my colleagues and my state. I urge a positive vote. Through the right to collectively bargain--a right afforded almost all other Maryland Public Employees and non-Maryland peer institutions--that non-tenure-track faculty, and, hopefully soon, all faculty, will have the voice they deserve.

Sincerely,

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