

Testimony
Dr. AJ "Tito" Baco
President, Montgomery College AAUP Full-time Faculty
Montgomery County Council
FY24 Operating Budget Hearing
April 11, 2023, at 7 p.m.

It is a privilege to represent the full-time faculty at Montgomery College (MC) and an honor to speak before you this evening.

Over the past year, the MC-AAUP Chapter has taken on an advocacy and advisory role across the state to help guide our colleagues at 4-year and 2-year institutions in their efforts to organize. We have testified at budget hearings to State Senators and at the State House, consulted with various labor groups, and advised faculty labor representatives at more than two dozen institutions in Maryland. We feel that this work has not only highlighted our role as a Chapter, but also brought great recognition to the work being done at MC.

One theme we continue to share at every opportunity is how proud we are of our role in collaboration with Management to advance the College forward and our role in supporting students. It is undeniable that the commitment from our faculty is an indelible thread that continues to sustain the College. One need not look any further than what was done over the past two years when a health pandemic and unpredictable economy would have absolutely wrecked weaker institutions. But full-time faculty retrained and redesigned courses to engage students where they were and now are working tirelessly to rebuild academic programs that suffered from enrollment declines.

Still, this is not exactly new news. I mean, the faculty at MC have been stepping up and doing critical work to support the police, firefighters, teachers, computer science techs, health care providers, and mechanics of the future for decades. What you might not know is to what extent faculty go above and beyond, to support the mission of the College and our students on a personal level.

Our students are our future lifeline so of course it behooves us all to take this kind of great care for them. One day they will be taking care of us and will

remember the lessons we taught them as well as those which they learned by watching how we guided and supported them.

So, please support the College's FY24 budget requests and reject the County Executive's additional \$2.9M reduction to the MC capital budget. In doing so, you are advocating for Montgomery College and our faculty, but especially for students whose time is coming sooner than we may think.

Thank you for your time and service!