

**Written Testimony in Support of 21-0050R**  
**Members of the Curatorial Department, Walters Art Museum**  
Baltimore City Council Hearing (14 October 2021, 10:00am)

As members of the Curatorial department at the Walters Art Museum, we urge the city council to pass 21-0050R in order to guarantee our right to collectively bargain, thereby including us among all other city workers. It is our view that organizing a union at the Walters will be to the benefit of all by ensuring a safe, healthy, and equitable workplace. In the Curatorial department specifically, there are a number of key issues we hope to redress through collective bargaining.

The Curatorial department has felt deeply the negative impact of being at-will employees. The insecurity of our jobs—as demonstrated by a number of terminations in recent years—has taken its toll and has fostered an environment of fear and uncertainty. Furthermore, irregular performance reviews, preferential treatment based on personal relationships, a lack of salary transparency, and no clear process for advancement have led to disparities within the department. In addition, the erosion of benefits, chief among them pensions and sick leave, have led to further insecurity. With these benefits restored and key policies regarding pay, performance, and advancement clearly codified in a collectively bargained contract, we hope to instead cultivate a work environment that is equitable, supportive, and secure.

Other policies that would improve the work culture of the Curatorial department specifically include the shared right to our own intellectual property. We also hope to establish an open access policy regarding the records and minutes across all areas of the institution including the Board of Trustees records.

In short, members of the Curatorial department have felt we were at the whim of the museum and its mercurial policies in various ways. We are pushing for a collectively bargained contract in order to establish job security, clear policies, increased transparency, and the equitable treatment of all staff.

In Solidarity,  
Members of the WAM Curatorial Team