



Christopher J. O'Donnell  
President  
c/o Massachusetts Maritime Academy  
Harrington, Room C322A  
101 Academy Drive  
Buzzards Bay, MA 02532

Affiliated with the MTA and NEA

(508) 830-6684  
Fax: (508) 830-6699  
President@MSCAunion.org

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Chairs Brady and Gordon, Vice Chairs Feingold and Higgins, and members of the committee:

My name is CJ O'Donnell. I represent approximately 4,000 faculty and librarians at the nine Massachusetts state universities.

As we all know, on March 10, 2020 Governor Baker declared a state of emergency and most public sector employees – including higher education workers – as essential workers who were to report to work, be it on site or off site. State university faculty and librarians were among those declared essential workers.

Although a majority of the state university faculty and librarians were allowed to work from off-site locations, a number of our members were required to show up in classrooms, laboratories, libraries and other on-site work locations given the hands-on, practical experience that the state universities provide is various majors.

The state employee retirement Groups are defined based on the stress and health risk of the type of employment the worker engages in. Adding up to three years of age, creditable service, or a combination thereof would recognize the added stress on-site workers were subjected to on out-facing positions with the general public, including students.

On behalf of the state university faculty and librarians required to work on campus, I urge support for House 2808, *An Act relative to providing COVID-19 retirement credit to essential public-sector workers*.

I thank you for your attentiveness and urge that H2808 be reported out of the Joint Committee on Public Service favorably.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher J. O'Donnell". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Christopher J. O'Donnell  
President, Massachusetts State College Association