

Jesse Colvin, SYA - Maryland Corps Bill Testimony

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Position: FAV



SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations
Testimony of Jesse Colvin, CEO of Service Year Alliance
On March 4, 2020
Before the Budget & Taxation Committee

I'm Jesse Colvin, the CEO of Service Year Alliance, and I am proud to offer testimony in support of SB 845.

Service Year Alliance is a nonprofit whose mission is to make a year of paid, full-time service — a service year — a common expectation and opportunity for all young Americans.

Before my time at Service Year Alliance, I served in the military as an Army Ranger. I served 4 combat deployments in Afghanistan. My military experience, especially in Afghanistan, is where I learned what is possible when Americans from different walks of life join together to tackle shared problems.

What happens when you share a foxhole — that bond you build — is the same thing that happens when you share a worksite or conservation project or a classroom during a service year. Different foxholes, same bonds.

That's why we're leading the Serve America Together campaign, a campaign to make national service a part of growing up in our country. And that's why I'm thrilled to be here today in Annapolis, where leaders are working to make that a reality here in Maryland.

Leaders like Senate President Bill Ferguson, Senator Shelly Hettleman, and Delegate Sandy Rosenberg have seen first-hand what an incredible opportunity a service year is for young people.

More than 1,400 people serve annually across Maryland today. They serve with organizations like the Latin American Youth Center, which connects young people to career pathways and sets them up for success in college and beyond. And Civic Works YouthBuild, where people aren't just learning construction skills and earning certifications, but they're doing it while rebuilding affordable housing for people in need within their communities.

Not only do service years tackle critical issues in local communities across our state, they are also an effective workforce development tool. In fact, service years have a triple bottom line: they transform lives, improve communities, and resuscitate civic health.

Service years allow young people to learn workplace behaviors and skills, experience a specific field, make connections, and develop the pride that comes with a paycheck.

This bill will revamp Maryland Corps and allow the state legislature to study the potential of expanding service year opportunities in order to enhance Maryland's workforce and shape the careers of the next generation of young Marylanders.

Service Year Alliance is a nationally-oriented organization supporting efforts across the country, and with this bill, Maryland joins New Hampshire as the first states that are taking the bold step to invest in service years to support the current and future needs of employers in the state and ensure that the opportunity to serve is available to every young person in Maryland — and across the country — who wants to make their community a better place to live and work.

We at Service Year Alliance look forward to continuing to support this bill and lifting Maryland up as an example that other leaders in other state houses across the country can follow.

Jose Granados - Maryland Corps Bill Testimony

Uploaded by: Granados, Jose

Position: FAV



**SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations
Testimony of Jose Granados, Latin American Youth Center
On March 4, 2020
Before the Budget & Taxation Committee**

My name is Jose Granados and I grew up in Prince George's County, Maryland. I graduated from college in 2015 as a first generation immigrant to go to college, with the intention of becoming a teacher. In order to teach, I planned to go to graduate school. I applied and was unfortunately not accepted to the program I had my heart set on. When grad school fell through I didn't have much else going on. I was applying to jobs without much luck and was discouraged.

One of my friends did an internship at Latin America Youth Center (LAYC) and ended up telling me about their AmeriCorps service year doing educational programming for youth.

I ended up interviewing at LAYC where I could dedicate a year of service to the community, help youth with tutoring, and give students the tools they needed to navigate the school year through LAYC's afterschool tutoring program. I ended up doing a part-time service year as an AmeriCorps member and fell in love with the program.

I tutored "English as a Second Language" (ESL) students, and, as an ESL student myself, I understood the struggles and challenges they face. I was honored to have the opportunity to use my bilingual skills throughout my service year to help ESL students with their homework and guide them to get to the next level and achieve their educational goals.

My AmeriCorps service year was a gratifying moment that ultimately helped me become a teacher. When my original plans to go to grad school fell through, my service year helped me pave a new path to my dream career. I was a middle school teacher for 2 years in Maryland where I taught Spanish.



And today, I manage Curriculum Development and Instruction at Latin American Youth Center in Prince George's County — where I did my year of service.

I am proud to support this bill and speak today about the importance of service years both for the young person who serves as well as for the communities in which we serve. My service year made my career possible and showed me that I could give back to the community where I grew up and be a role model to younger generations of what is possible.

Hettleman_FAV_SB845

Uploaded by: Hettleman, Shelly

Position: FAV



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN

SB 845 – HIGHER EDUCATION – MARYLAND CORPS PROGRAM FUND –
ALTERATIONS

In 2016, working with President Ferguson, I introduced a bill to create Maryland Corps, a program to provide young people between the ages of 17 and 23 access to a year of service. In exchange for committing themselves to at least 9 months of work in a nonprofit or government agency, these young people would participate in a year long program to learn about the importance of giving back to their communities, of what it means to be an active and engaged citizen dedicated to being a weaver of the fabric of our democracy.

In addition to giving back to their communities, I envisioned that Maryland Corps would be a vehicle through which young people from all across our state – from the most rural and urban and suburban parts, from high income, as well as low and modest-income families, would come together to learn about one another. Through giving back to their communities, these young citizens would heal the divisiveness that has torn apart our nation – and they would do so one relationship at a time. In addition to building bonds with one another, their service would have a ripple effect across our state.

Young Marylanders would earn a stipend through their work and, after successful completion, earn a scholarship that could be used at a Maryland higher education institution for college or for a vocational program.

This bill would build upon the original concept of Maryland Corps by funding a study that would examine the program as a workforce development tool. It would help to build the foundations that, unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, were never fleshed out. And it would help put in place the necessary framework for a successful program launch.

Maryland can lead the nation in our dedication to service. Thank you for your support of Maryland Corps 4 years ago and I ask for your support of SB845. Thank you.

James Knight- Maryland Corps Testimony

Uploaded by: Knight, James

Position: FAV



**SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations
Testimony of James Knight, Alumnus of Civic Works YouthBuild
On March 4, 2020
Before the Budget & Taxation Committee**

My name is James Knight, and I did a service year with Civic Works' YouthBuild program in Baltimore when I was 22. By the age of sixteen, I was fully supporting myself. And by 22, the stakes were even higher — I had a family of my own to support.

That's when I chose to pursue a career in construction and joined Civic Works' YouthBuild service year program to develop the skills I needed to achieve that goal. I always wanted to do construction work. And serving with Civic Works allowed me to live my dream. To me, construction was much more than an occupation.

Two months into my service year, I was thriving. I was able to gain hands-on construction experience while renovating a house in a low-income community. I installed doors, painted walls and ceilings, waterproofed a basement, and installed a new bathroom sink, vanity and toilet.

Because of my service year, I was able to become a Sherman Williams Certified Painter and earned my OSHA 10-hour Construction certification and Home Builders Institute (HBI) Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Training (PACT) Certification upon completion of the program.

My service year with Civic Works took my passion and dreams of a career in construction and made it a reality. The skills and certifications I gained through YouthBuild will be invaluable assets throughout my career. I was going through a life changing situation and by serving, I was able to involve myself in something positive — something engaging, and giving back to my community was life-changing.

Today, I work full-time at Civic Works. I couldn't be happier with my choice to serve because it put me on my career path and allowed me to pursue my dreams.

A service year gives people an opportunity to transform their lives and I fully support this bill because it is the first step in affording all young people in Maryland with the same life-changing opportunity to serve that I had.

Shirley - MD Corps Testimony

Uploaded by: Sagawa, Shirley

Position: FAV

SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations
Testimony of Shirley Sagawa, Former CEO of Service Year Alliance
On March 4, 2020
Before the Budget & Taxation Committee

A version of this testimony was [published](#) in the Washington Post in 2016 in support of expanding service years in Maryland.

As a Maryland resident, a former member of the Maryland Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism, and the former CEO of a national service organization, Service Year Alliance, I am proud to offer testimony in support of this bill.

This bill revamps Maryland Corps — which was originally signed into law in 2016 and would have, if funded, given 100 young adults in Maryland the chance to spend a year in community service before college, supported by a modest stipend and rewarded with money for college.

Today's bill brings Maryland Corps back to life and is the first step towards giving every young person in Maryland the opportunity to serve. This bill will initially allow the state legislature to study the power of service year to enhance Maryland's workforce — a critical workforce development tool that will benefit the next generation of young Marylanders.

Maryland has a long history of leading in service. Nearly 25 years ago, it became the first state with a service-learning requirement for high school graduation. Unfortunately, it remains the only state with such a requirement.

Around the same time, Barbara A. Mikulski (D), then a junior U.S. senator, helped enact a pilot national service program. This demonstration program became the model for AmeriCorps, enacted a few years later, and Mikulski, in her role as the Democratic leader of the subcommittee responsible for the program and, later, the full Appropriations Committee, made sure AmeriCorps was funded.

Thanks in no small part to Mikulski's efforts, Maryland has sustained service year programs for two decades that have provided much-needed help to the community while transforming the lives of the people who serve.

These programs include Civic Works, which puts 200 young adults annually into service year positions that enable them to learn job skills while meeting community needs. For example, Civic Works service year corps members have weatherized homes in Baltimore and built a "green," 200-square-foot "tiny house" that can exist off the grid; tutored students as part of the Advancement Via Individual Determination program and helped them prepare for college; and learned farming skills at Little Gunpowder Farm while growing high-quality vegetables at an affordable price.

Another long-standing program, Volunteer Maryland, places AmeriCorps members in nonprofit organizations, schools and government agencies so they can provide more services, improve the effectiveness of the organizations' volunteer programs and increase organizational capacity to manage volunteer programs.

In more rural parts of the state, A STAR! in Western Maryland assigns AmeriCorps members to tackle local issues within a four-county region — serving, for example, in Boys & Girls Clubs, cooperative extension, Goodwill and preschool programs.

Baltimore Corps, co-founded in 2013 by Wes Moore and Fagan Harris in partnership with the Aspen Institute Franklin Project, fields young leaders to address the city's biggest challenges. And the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, headquartered in Baltimore, places recent college graduates in high-poverty communities nationwide.

Service year programs have a tremendous impact on communities across the state, and this bill is a critical first step in expanding service year opportunities so that every young person in Maryland has an opportunity to serve their community while transforming their lives and putting them on a pathway to future educational and career opportunities. I am honored to offer my support of this bill and hope the state legislature will use this bill as an opportunity for Maryland to continue to lead the country in service.

Maryland Corps Testimony Addendum

Uploaded by: Senator Ferguson, Senator Ferguson

Position: FAV

NATIONAL SERVICE IN MARYLAND



Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** ★★ ★



700

local service sites



6,800

Senior Corps &
AmeriCorps
members



\$39.7

million CNCS
and local
funding



\$93.5

million AmeriCorps
scholarships earned
since 1994

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SB 845 - Ferguson Testimony

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Position: FAV



The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

SB 845 - Higher Education - Maryland Corps Program Fund - Alterations

Testimony of Senator Bill Ferguson

On March 4, 2020

Before the Budget and Taxation Committee

Why This Bill Matters:

Faith in democratic institutions continues to decline due to polarization and distrust. National service programs like AmeriCorps are known for bringing Americans together from varying socio-economic, geographic, political, and racial backgrounds in the pursuit of a shared vision of improving communities.

At a time when our civic society is in need of fostering dialogue across lines of difference and rediscovering our shared humanity, national service is the mechanism to achieve those goals. Maryland should be leading the way in building out a thoughtful service program based on the needs of our communities and skills employers are seeking.”

As of today, more than 1,400 people serve annually across Maryland — transforming their lives and their communities through a service year. National service programs have been shown to be an effective workforce development tool that allows young people to learn workplace behaviors and skills, experience a specific field, make connections, and develop the pride that comes with a paycheck.

What This Bill Does:

SB 845 will reinvigorate the the Maryland Corps Program by providing a mandatory annual appropriation of \$150,000 to:

1. Study the potential use of the program as a workforce development tool and determine how alumni of the program could be better positioned to meet the current and future needs of employers in Maryland
2. Set up a fund to match grants from the private sector, or foundations received by the board for the fund

Why You Should Vote For This Bill:

SB 845 is the first step of reevaluating and revamping service opportunities in Maryland to ensure that all those who want to serve their communities have the ability to do so. Maryland has 700 local service sites that have brought nearly \$40 million in federal funding through the Corporation for National and Community Service into Maryland while playing a vital role in the communities where they operate. At the same time, 6,800 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps alumni have graduated from these programs and earned \$93.5 million in scholarships since 1994.

Governor Hogan has extolled the merits of national service as well. In 2018, when announcing Maryland as a top 10 AmeriState and Baltimore as a top 10 AmeriCity, Governor Hogan said, "Our administration is proud of this outstanding achievement for Baltimore City and Maryland. AmeriCorps members devote their time, energy, and expertise to serving our communities and addressing the important issues that affect our state, and today's announcement further illustrates the commitment of our citizens to changing Maryland for the better and making a difference in the world."

Maryland should be a leader in expanding service opportunities to all who wish to serve. The Maryland Corps program is fundamentally about repairing the fabric of our democracy by bridging the divide between people with diverse viewpoints and life experiences. At the same time, we can undertake a comprehensive and intentional approach to building out these service opportunities so they align with our state's workforce development needs and alumni are positioned to succeed in a 21st century economy.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 845 and I urge the committee to move this bill with a favorable report.

DBM_INFO_SB 845

Uploaded by: Wilkins, Barbara

Position: INFO



LARRY HOGAN
Governor

DAVID R. BRINKLEY
Secretary

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
Lieutenant Governor

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

SENATE BILL 845 Higher Education-Maryland Corps Program Fund-Alterations (Ferguson and Hettleman)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: March 4, 2020

COMMITTEE: Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

SUMMARY OF BILL: SB 845 mandates an annual appropriation, beginning FY 2022, in the amount of \$150,000 for the Maryland Corps Program, within the Governor's Office of Service and Volunteerism; and expands the use of Program funds to include expenses associated with studying (i) the potential use of the Program as a workforce development tool and (ii) how Program alumni could be better positioned to meet the current and future needs of Maryland employers.

EXPLANATION: The AmeriCorps State program, AmeriState, is a federally funded program and administers the AmeriCorps portfolios and related awards, which provided \$13 million as outlined in [2018-2019 Maryland AmeriCorps Report](#).

DBM's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the difficulty in balancing the State budget when the increased use of mandated spending continues unabated.

The FY 2022 General Fund forecast shows spending growth of 6.4%, whereas revenue growth is forecast to be 2.9%. Growth in State spending will outpace otherwise healthy revenue growth not only next year, but also for the foreseeable future. The result is a short and long-term structural gap that will continue to strain State resources until the underlying causes have been resolved.

General Fund Budget Outlook Fiscal 2022 - 2025

	Est. 2022	Est. 2023	Est. 2024	Est. 2025
Cash Balance	-\$833	-\$1,135	-\$1,201	-\$1,298
Structural Balance	-\$701	-\$905	-\$984	-\$1,071

Department of Legislative Services, January 2020 Fiscal Briefing

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For FY 22 – FY 25, the cumulative impact of an ongoing imbalance between spending and revenues is a \$3.6 billion structural gap. Our structural budget problem reflects a spending problem; not a revenue problem.

The ever-increasing use of mandates and entitlement spending by the General Assembly is a more recent practice, making the State’s structural budget deficit a chronic challenge. According to the Department of Legislative Services (DLS), 70.2% of the FY 2020 General Fund allowance is mandated or entitlement spending.

Until we achieve long-term structural balance, programs cannot rely on a consistent funding level. Constituencies for these proposed programs or enhanced spending bills should be forewarned that passage of this legislation does not guarantee future funding. Whatever specific funding is mandated will likely be repealed or otherwise modified in a subsequent Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) – this action is necessary to ensure a constitutionally required balanced budget in the next fiscal year.

The Administration is cognizant of the downside risks facing our economy and, in the FY 2021 Budget, has set aside \$1.3 billion in reserves. The Rainy Day Fund balance is equal to 6.25% of revenues, \$48 million more than recommended by the Spending Affordability Committee (SAC). Moody’s Analytics has recently advised of a slowdown in employment growth in the latter part of FY 2021, which DLS estimates would add \$241 million to the structural budget gap in FY 2021 and \$419 million in FY 2022. Historic increases in funding for both K-12 education, as proposed by the Kirwan Commission, and school construction will further aggravate the budget gap.

The 2019 SAC commentary encourages a cautious fiscal approach -- **“Out-year fiscal stress is anticipated despite the expectation that personal income and employment will continue to grow steadily, and entitlement and prison caseloads will hold steady or decline. An imbalance is forecast before accounting for any recommendations from the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education.”**

**For additional information, contact Barbara Wilkins at
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