



SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
February 3, 2021

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SB 538 – Higher Education – Community College Tuition and Residency Waivers - Funding

POSITION: SUPPORT

On behalf of Maryland’s 16 community colleges, I am writing to support SB 538. The students being served by current tuition waivers has never been the issue for community colleges. Our colleges, in part, exist to give these students opportunities that they cannot receive elsewhere. The mission of community college is to raise every student’s quality of life by providing the skills needed to be successful in the workforce, especially the most vulnerable through access and affordability.

However, over the past decade, as waivers have expanded, there has been no support from the state to cover the loss in tuition. As of the most recent academic year data are available, community colleges are waiving nearly \$10 million, as well as providing an additional \$5.4 million in support services for some of these students who are having their tuition waived. The results of waiving tuition do not mean that the cost of educating a student goes away. Unfortunately, these costs must be absorbed by other students, which goes contrary to providing an affordable opportunity for regularly enrolled students who must now pay the additional cost.

Maryland Community Colleges Mandated Tuition Waivers
 Financial Aid Information System (FAIS) Report: Academic Year 2017-18

Type of Waiver	Numbers	Dollars
Tuition Waivers to Seniors	6,295	\$ 4,024,878
Tuition Waivers to Students ¹	6,114	4,101,168
Tuition Waivers to Disabled	589	596,810
Tuition Waivers to Foster Care	324	743,171
Tuition Waivers to Homeless Youth	112	326,420
Total Waivers	13,434	\$ 9,792,447

¹ Includes tuition reductions and waivers under the programs for Health Manpower Shortage Program and nonresident nursing students.

Source: MHEC FAIS Report, April 2020

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges is in favor of this bill Senator Guzzone, and sponsors, have proposed and believe that it could in fact incentivize our colleges to support more students instead of the current dilemma of not knowing how best to afford to do so. Providing \$10 million to support state-mandated tuition and residency waivers will create sustainable public policy for these populations and MACC, on behalf of our members, urges a favorable report.