



# UNIVERSITY SYSTEM *of* MARYLAND

## EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

### Senate Bill 965

### Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions

March 15, 2021

### Favorable with Amendments

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on Senate Bill 965.

The University System of Maryland (USM) fully supports the creation of a collaborative review committee involving MSDE, MHEC and the institutions that offer teacher preparation programs that would be charged with determining whether proposed regulations for program approval are “extraneous, redundant or unnecessary.”

On **page 27 lines 6-11, the bill** describes the establishment of a review committee but overlooks who exactly will convene meetings and a general structure for accountability. Who does the committee report to? Would the committee be a standing committee to provide for ongoing review as MSDE considers new regulations, or would a committee be adjourned and reconstituted as necessary?

Absent from Senate Bill 965 is a specific reference to the Master’s degree and graduate coursework as part of the career ladder and workforce development, in addition to the pathway that identifies National Board recognition. Master’s degrees, and especially MAT degrees have proven to be a valuable recruitment tool for career changers who want to become teachers, especially in STEM shortage areas. Additional graduate coursework helps school districts meet workforce demands when additional licensures are needed.

In addition to our interest in the teacher pipeline topics, we would like to call attention to a very important part of the legislation that references the support strategy of tutors (**Section 4, lines 17-30**) p 32-33. USM strongly supports tutors for students who need the one-to-one encouragement and instruction to be successful.

We request that the committee support language to be added that includes college students as a potential pool for tutors in the schools. Doing so would help us recruit and encourage college student tutors into a valuable civic and community engagement activity. This activity would lead to:

- Stronger citizenship education through service-learning opportunities.
- Provide financial support for college students who would be paid for this work.
- Potentially recruit students to be teachers if they find a passion for working with students.
- Lead to the streamlining of security clearance for students tutoring in the schools.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide our thoughts regarding Senate Bill 965.

