



Senate Bill 894

Post-Crisis Jobs Act of 2021

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

To: Finance and Budget and Taxation
Committees

Date: March 17, 2021

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 894 **WITH AMENDMENTS**. This bill authorizes individuals to complete certain education or training requirements through a digital learning program and establishes multiple grant programs aimed at improving workforce training in Maryland. While well-intentioned, this bill also imposes a uniform mandate requiring that 75% of any increase in the total state operating funds granted to Maryland's community colleges in fiscal 2023 through fiscal 2025 be allocated to workforce training **only**.

Maryland's counties recognize the desire to create stronger workforce training opportunities in light of the pandemic, and each community college board and leadership surely takes such matters seriously. However, SB 894 would substitute a one-size-fits-all state policy for that local judgement. It is pertinent to allow community colleges to continue to have flexibility to allocate operating funds in a way that best serves the interests of all students.

Community colleges are a valuable strategic asset to our state and local communities and as a partner in helping get Marylanders into the workforce, counties know that community colleges are a critical provider of Maryland's workforce training programs leading to licensure, certification, and credential achievement.

As written, this bill would inhibit community colleges' abilities to allocate already scarce operating funding where it is needed the most by mandating 75% of increased funding go only to workforce training. Accordingly, MACo **SUPPORTS** SB 894 and requests a **FAVORABLE** report **WITH AMENDMENTS** to strike language that directs increases in state operating funds for community colleges to go solely to workforce training in fiscal 2023 through fiscal 2025.