

Senate Bill 136
CalvertHealth and MedStar St. Mary's Hospital
Unfavorable Report
February 9, 2022

We are writing today in opposition to Senate Bill 136—College of Southern Maryland—Charles County Campus Transition to Charles County Community College.

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is a nationally-recognized regional community college that creates opportunities for all students in the Southern Maryland region. We do not believe SB 136 is in the best interests of students, residents, or local healthcare partners who continue to do the crucial work of caring for our community, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CalvertHealth and MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, two of the largest employers in Southern Maryland, rely heavily on CSM as a regional asset in workforce development. Never has this been more important than now, when health care as a whole has shed nearly 500,000 workers since February 2020, or approximately 30% of the workforce (*source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*).

At a time when fewer healthcare workers are reporting to hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other crucial medical infrastructure, Southern Maryland continues to experience significant growth: a 9.6% population increase between 2010 and 2020, or more than 30,000 new residents (*source: U.S. Census Bureau*).

To deliver the quality care our community deserves, recruitment is an ongoing focus of our hospitals and providers. CSM is an important regional asset and major source of nursing graduates. It wasn't until 2000, when CSM became a tri-county community college, that the nursing program was able to be expanded. The nursing program doubled, with two cohorts of students now being accepted annually. CSM has subsequently graduated two classes of nurses every year. This expansion addressed the healthcare shortage then, and it is even more critical now.

We are stronger together. Hobbling the ability of tri-county students to access the regional resources that CSM provides is not in the best interests of our patients, community, workforce, or healthcare partners.

We respectfully ask that the members of the Senate Committee for Education, Health and Environmental Affairs give this bill an unfavorable report.



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