
SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

Testimony by
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director
March 15, 2023

SB918 – Higher Education - Community College Facilities Renewal Grant Program - Alterations

POSITION: Support

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, thanks Senator King for her sponsorship of SB918 to expand the Facilities Renewal Grant to all 16 community colleges and help ensure equitable funding across our campuses.

The current Facilities Renewal Grant program only allows half of the colleges to receive funding every other year. Due to the percentage tie to the CIP of the Construction Grant Program, there are annual fluctuations which has led to an inequal distributions of funds year over year. SB918 is crucial in addressing these issues and ensuring that all community colleges in Maryland have access to the necessary funding to maintain safe and healthy learning environments for our students.

This bill will provide an more equity within the facilities renewal fund and will also address a structural problem within the original language of the legislation that established the grant program. The original language caped the grant to a maximum of \$500,000, which has left funding behind as the Department of Legislative Services analysis has listed as an area that needs to be resolved within the grant. This bill will allow for growth and equity for community colleges.

Our facilities renewal backlog is now over \$115 million in need and this program has aided our colleges in removing differed maintenance from the Community College Capital Construction Grant Program, allowing for colleges to maintain state-of-the-art facilities and allow colleges to renovate and build new facilities at the same time. These projects are inclusive of roof repairs, window, door and boiler replacements and even electrical upgrades. Given the age of our buildings, continued deferral can lead to increased costs in the long run. Failure to repair these, or similar systems can also lead to disastrous environmental and health issues. In addition, completing these repairs at the expense of instructional funding is not a sustainable solution, and our colleges have vigilantly avoided increasing tuition to pay for them.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill, and all your efforts to meet the needs of the students we serve. MACC asks the Committee to give SB918 a favorable report.