



GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade

SB864– Universities at Shady Grove Regional Higher Education Center – Designation
as Community of Innovation
Senate Committee on Education, Energy and the Environment
Position: **Support**
Greater Washington Board of Trade
March 21, 2024

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members,

The Greater Washington Board of Trade is a pro-business and non-partisan organization supporting all industry sectors in the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland, and Northern Virginia, having done so for the last 134 years. We support SB472.

I am writing to express my support for Maryland Senate Bill 864, which seeks to designate Universities at Shady Grove (USG) as the State Regional Higher Education Community of Innovation. We believe this bill is a crucial step towards fostering excellence, diversity, and opportunity in Maryland's educational landscape.

We are confident of USG's capacity to serve as a beacon of innovation in higher education. USG's unique collaborative model, bringing together nine prestigious Maryland universities under one roof, demonstrates a commitment to efficiency, synergy, and excellence. By pooling resources, expertise, and facilities, USG has created a dynamic educational environment that offers a wide range of programs and opportunities to students from diverse backgrounds.

Designating USG as the State Regional Higher Education Community of Innovation will not only recognize its outstanding contributions but also provide the necessary support and resources to further expand its impact. This designation will empower USG to continue its innovative initiatives, such as the Biomedical Sciences and Engineering (BSE) Education Facility, which equips students with cutting-edge skills and knowledge essential for success in today's competitive job market.

Furthermore, USG's emphasis on accessibility and affordability aligns perfectly with the state's goals of promoting equity and inclusion in higher education. By offering flexible schedules, online options, and partnerships with local employers, USG ensures that education remains accessible to all, regardless of socioeconomic status or personal circumstances. This commitment to diversity and inclusivity enriches not only the educational experience but also strengthens our communities and economy.

We urge you to support Maryland Senate Bill 864 and designate Universities at Shady Grove as the State Regional Higher Education Community of Innovation. By doing so, you will not only recognize USG's outstanding achievements but also invest in a brighter future for Maryland, one where innovation, accessibility, and excellence are important in higher education.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact of this bill on Maryland's educational landscape.