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THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401  
FREDERICK COUNTY DELEGATION

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March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

The Honorable Guy J. Guzzone  
Chairman  
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing  
11 Bladen St.  
Annapolis MD, 21401

The Honorable Benjamin S. Barnes  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Lowe House Office Building, Room 121  
6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis MD, 21401

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Chairman Barnes,

The Frederick County Delegation would like to indicate our support for Maryland Independent College and University Association's (MICUA) request to preserve funding for our state's independent universities. The Frederick Delegation fully supports MICUA's request to:

1. Retain the current funding structure for the Sellinger formula rather than adopting the reduced funding rate proposed in the BRFA.
2. Include a new provision in the BRFA that ensures no single MICUA institution can receive more than 35% of the Sellinger formula allocation in one fiscal year.

The strength of Maryland's higher education system is built on the Sellinger and Cade formulas. As a result of these formulas, Maryland has an ecosystem of collaboration amongst the segments of higher education. No individual sector of higher education can possibly meet all the demands of our economy and the needs of Maryland students, which is why, for 50 years the General Assembly has sought to provide to the independent sector a small percentage of the per student funding that is provided to USM institutions.

Reducing the funding of the Sellinger program by nearly half will have a significant impact on Maryland's non-profit institutions and the Maryland students they serve. 89% of all Sellinger funds are dedicated to financial aid for Maryland students and at nearly all MICUA institutions, 99% of that funding is awarded to Maryland undergraduates. The funding cut proposed in the BRFA creates disparities among the MICUA institutions where some receive drastic reductions (282%, 108%, 84%), seven receive cuts ranging from 11 to 28% and one institution receives no cut in its funding. The MICUA proposal will balance these disparities.

MICUA members avoided closures due to the pandemic but are still feeling the impact of the financial losses and the enrollment declines. When those effects are combined with the delays in the FAFSA, low-income students will suffer and that is where Sellinger dollars are utilized and most needed.

Hood College and Mount St. Mary's University, both of which are MICUA institutions, are critical to the well-being of Frederick County. The benefits that these universities provide to educational and workforce development in Frederick County are dependent on continued support from the Sellinger fund. Given the positive impact that MICUA institutions have on both Frederick County and Maryland as a whole, we encourage you to adopt the MICUA compromise proposal.

Sincerely,



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Delegate Jesse T. Pippy - Chair



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Senator William Folden - Vice Chair