

SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

**Testimony by
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director
January 17, 2024**

SB 121 – College of Southern Maryland – Funding and Responsibilities – La Plata Pool

Position: Oppose

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, opposes SB 121, which would require the Board of Trustees of the College of Southern Maryland to fund and reopen a pool by the end of 2024. This legislation would establish a precedent that would challenge the fiduciary responsibilities each community college board of trustees has in ensuring the best interests of the college are followed and that students are best served with the resources available.

While the sponsor may have the best intentions for this legislation, that is not being questioned. However, requiring a Board of Trustees to fund the planning, design, repair, renovation, and reconstruction of any project should not be made by statute. Decisions about how best to finance the operations of any Maryland community college should be made by the Board of Trustees and be guided by the mission of the college.

The Board of Trustees at the College of Southern Maryland is entrusted with the overall responsibility for the governance of the college as stated in Statute 16-103 for all Maryland's community colleges and more specifically in opposition to the powers entrusted to the College as stated in Statute Section 16-606. Requiring the board to divert funding for a pool does not allow the Board to make those decisions and may impact the college's ability to provide the resources it needs to support the necessary academic needs so students can achieve their academic and career goals.

On behalf of Maryland's 16 community colleges, we respectfully request that governance and stewardship of community colleges remain within the purview of the Board of Trustees.