

Education Advocacy Coalition

for Students with Disabilities

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL 475

Community Colleges—Supplemental Services and Supports for Students With Disabilities Grant Program

February 11, 2020

Position: Support

The Education Advocacy Coalition for Students with Disabilities (EAC), a coalition of more than 25 organizations and individuals concerned with education policy for students with disabilities in Maryland, supports House Bill 475, which would require, beginning in fiscal year 2022, an annual budget appropriation of \$2.5 million to the Maryland Higher Education Commission to award grants to provide supplemental services and supports for students with disabilities at community colleges.

Research shows that a college education is as important for students with disabilities as for those without. In fact, students with disabilities who are included in academic courses and campus life on a college campus are more likely to be employed, earn more, and require fewer supports throughout life.

Many students with disabilities have received services and supports under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) throughout their education. However, the IDEA does not provide these same students with the supports and services they may need in college. Since adequate services and supports remain essential to academic success and may be required to do so under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or under the Americans with Disabilities Act, colleges often provide supplemental services and supports to students with disabilities, but do so with limited available funding.

Requiring funding to support those colleges to provide these services and supports will result in more students with disabilities having what they need to succeed, and will expand access to higher education opportunities for students with disabilities.

For all of these reasons, the EAC supports House Bill 475.

For additional information, please contact Leslie Seid Margolis, Chairperson at lesliem@disabilityrightsmd.org or 410-727-6352, ext. 2505.

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