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**Written testimony to the House Appropriations Committee
HB 469 - Institutions of Postsecondary Education – Disorderly School Closures
February 18, 2020**

SUPPORT

Good afternoon Chair McIntosh and members of the Committee. On behalf of Maryland's 20,000 state, municipal, and public education workers, AFT- Maryland asks for a favorable report on HB 469, which will define what an orderly school closure is; prohibit a closing school from not properly notifying students of its closure and failing to obtain transfer agreements; prevent an institution from collecting on student debt; and holds executive officers personally liable for disorderly closures.

In the past five years, 17 Maryland for-profit campus locations have closed impacting 6,872 students. When a school closes, students should not be left scrambling trying to figure out how they will complete their degrees, obtain their transcripts, or burdened with paying a debt to an institution that is no longer operational.

Although Maryland cannot prohibit schools from abruptly closing, it can create incentives for schools to close in a way that is less harmful to students and is not an abrupt closure. Clear guidelines for how schools conduct closures are needed to protect students and ensure that schools cannot close in a disorderly way.

It is for these reasons that we ask the committee give a favorable report to HB 469.

Marietta English
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