



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT
HB 1260 Historically Black Colleges
And Universities – Funding
House Appropriations Committee

Good afternoon Chairwoman McIntosh, Vice-Chair Jackson, members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Al Collins and I serve as the Legislative Director for the Maryland Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians as well as a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland's Legislative Committee. In those capacities I am here to support HB 1260.

There are few historically black institutions more valuable to its community and the economics and culture of the larger society than Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Statistics show that approximately one half of all black college graduates are products of HBCUs; and one-third of African Americans with degrees in natural sciences and one-half with degrees in math have gained them through HBCU's. HBCUs graduate more than 50% of African American professionals and public school teachers and 70% of African American dentists.

Even more importantly, many if not most, of HBCU students are first generation college educated, often coming from rural and inner-city communities. Finally, we note one of the most unrecognized benefit of these institutions: that they provide social, economic and cultural value to their municipal communities. This is particularly true of rural and other indigent communities where colleges and universities produce jobs, private rental housing, public and social services, and cultural and spiritual uplift. These are essential community benefits which would be otherwise unavailable in many such localities. While far from the circumstances which spawned them Historically Black Colleges and Universities are still essential missions to the black community. By sustaining the funding for HB 1260 you are sending an important message of support for our HBCUs and showing that you believe they are vital to our system of higher education.

We respectfully request a favorable report.