



Senate Bill 608

Community Colleges – State Funding - Revision

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: February 19, 2020

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 608. The bill would clarify and strengthen the funding connection between four-year and two-year schools, each with an important role in Maryland’s higher education and job readiness strategy.

The bill requires non-capital appropriations, regardless of where or how they are budgeted, to be included in the annual calculation of community college aid under the State’s Senator John A. Cade Funding Formula. In Fiscal Year 2020, a targeted cost of living increase provided to the University System of Maryland institutions was excluded from the basis for community college funding, simply because it did not obviously fit the too-strict statutory definition for operating revenues constituting the base for that formula. SB 608 offers a sensible clarification to ensure community colleges are not similarly left behind.

Budget cutbacks place pressure on already tight county budgets, prompting tuition increases from the community colleges. During a rapidly-moving economy, and constant pressures for worker retraining, added burdens on tuition frustrate the job readiness goals of our local campuses.

SB 608 would sensibly clarify the calculation of appropriations provided to Maryland’s community colleges. Strong community colleges contribute directly to Maryland’s workforce and will help keep Maryland as a leader in education. For this reason, MACo urges the committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 608.