



The Education Trust

Closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement, pre-k through college.

The Budget and Taxation Committee of the Maryland State Senate
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

March 11, 2020

Senate Bill 1043 Favorable

Chair Guzzone; Vice Chair Rosapepe; Education, Business, and Administration Subcommittee
Chair Zucker; and members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 1043: *Historically Black Colleges and Universities – Funding*. The Education Trust is a policy and advocacy organization that works to advance educational opportunity and outcomes for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. We do this by providing data and information to advocates and policymakers about the condition of access and opportunity for these students and how existing and future policies can be designed to remove barriers.

Last March, The Education Trust released a report, [Broken Mirrors: Black Student Representation at Public State Colleges and Universities](#), which examined Black representation among undergraduates and degree earners in 41 states to see which states have public colleges and universities (both two-year and four-year) that reflect the demographic of the state. The report found that in [Maryland, only 36.9% of Black adults between the ages 25-64 currently have a college degree](#), and there's a 16.7% gap between the shares of bachelor's degrees awarded to White residents and those going to Black residents.¹ While all of Maryland's institutions of higher education bear responsibility for addressing these disconcerting inequities, Maryland HBCUs play a critically important and outsize role in creating equitable education opportunities for Maryland residents. It is a moral imperative and it is in the state's economic self-interest to invest in Maryland's HBCUs. For this reason, **The Education Trust urges the committee to give SB1043 a favorable report.**

¹ <https://edtrust.org/resource/broken-mirrors-black-representation/>

Maryland HBCUs Promote Equity for Students of Color and Students from Low-Income Backgrounds, and are Critical if Maryland is to Reach its 2025 Degree Attainment Goal

Despite their small size, budget, and enrollment, Maryland’s four HBCUs collectively enroll more than half of the Black students seeking bachelor’s degrees at public institutions in the state, and graduate 35.8% of all Black public undergraduate degree earners in the state.²

Maryland’s HBCUs serve more than just Black students. HBCUs also educate the lion’s share of the state’s students from low-income backgrounds. On average, 66% of Maryland’s HBCU students are Pell eligible, with Coppin State peaking at 77%.³ In contrast, only 27% of students at other institutions are Pell recipients.⁴ According to the [Brookings Institute](#), HBCUs, in general, do better at getting Black students from low-income backgrounds into the top earnings quintile.⁵ In Maryland, students of color are more likely to attend four-year colleges than their counterparts in other states, in part because they have so many HBCU options.

Maryland’s HBCUs have recently received media coverage for their increasing enrollment of Latino students. **As such, this bill is an opportunity to boost degree attainment among Maryland’s Latino residents.** A recent [Washington Post article](#) chronicled growing racial and ethnic diversity at Maryland’s HBCUs, particularly at Morgan State University, the largest of the four institutions, noting that, “[s]ince 2006, Hispanic student enrollment at Morgan has more than quadrupled, jumping from 60 students to more than 260.”⁶ According to our research in [Broken Mirrors II](#) and Maryland’s [State Equity Report Card](#), Latino residents make up 10.2% of residents in the state, while only 8.7% of current Maryland college students are Latino, so there’s room for improvement.⁷ HBCUs can play a key part in decreasing the 27% gap between the shares of bachelor’s degrees awarded to White and Latino residents, which is one of the biggest gaps in the nation. Thus, an investment in HBCUs is an important part of making education equity real. Moreover, as the percentage of Maryland’s residents of color continues to increase, Maryland’s HBCUs will need to play an essential role in educating students if Maryland is to reach the [55% postsecondary degree attainment goal by 2025 and ensure that the state’s workforce is truly competitive](#).

An Investment in HBCUs is an Investment in Maryland’s Economy

Investing in HBCUs is not a charity — their students, alumni, faculty, staff, and administrators are taxpayers. Maryland’s HBCUs more than hold their weight in the state economy. According to [research by UNCF](#), a Maryland HBCU graduate working full time throughout their working life can expect to earn \$985,000 more than they would have earned without a college credential.⁸

² National Center for Education Statistics

³ National Center for Education Statistics

⁴ National Center for Education Statistics

⁵ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/social-mobility-memos/2017/01/19/the-contribution-of-historically-black-colleges-and-universities-to-upward-mobility/>

⁶ https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/a-historically-black-college-in-maryland-is-growing--by-enrolling-hispanic-white-and-international-students/2019/10/09/64185318-def3-11e9-be96-6adb81821e90_story.html

⁷ <https://s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/edtrustmain/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/10123122/Broken-Mirrors-Latino-Student-Representation-at-State-Public-Colleges-and-Universities-September-2019.pdf>

⁸ https://www.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/fy_2018_budget_fact_sheets/HBCU_FactSht_Maryland_5-17D.pdf

[Maryland's HBCUs collectively generate \\$1 billion in total economic impact](#) for the state every year, via direct spending by HBCUs on faculty, employees, academic programs, operations, and spending by HBCU students, not to mention the subsequent effects of that spending. In fact, every \$1 million initially spent creates 14 jobs annually.⁹ All told, the researchers estimated that Maryland's HBCUs had generated over 9,000 jobs for their local and regional economies in 2014.¹⁰ **An investment in HBCUs is an investment in the Maryland economy.**

Maryland's Opportunity to Lead

For more than 13 years, Maryland has been embroiled in the lawsuit, *The Coalition for Equity and Excellence in Maryland Higher Education v. Maryland Higher Education Commission* without resolution. Other states have also grappled with similar lawsuits over the years, and the results of these lawsuits show why meaningful collaboration is essential. Mississippi agreed to pay up to \$503 million over 17 years to its three HBCUs when the [Ayers case](#) was finally settled in 2002. Unfortunately, Mississippi made [unrealistic enrollment stipulations, and as a result, has failed to fully fund the settlement which has harmed Black students in the state and represents another missed opportunity on the path toward true integration](#).¹¹

However, Maryland does not have to go down the path of Mississippi; and it is the sincere belief of The Education Trust that Maryland can come to resolution that is in the best interest of Maryland's students. SB 1043 could be a crucial step toward resolving the suit, but, more importantly, could help Maryland achieve its goal of being the nation's most equitable and most excellent education system. In recent years, the Maryland General Assembly has made bold, unprecedented, and wholistic commitments to raise academic achievement and ensure equity such as the passage of The Maryland Dream Act, the creation of the Maryland College Promise scholarships, historic investments in rebuilding Maryland's school facilities, and the creation of The Kirwan Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. SB 1043 complements this work by investing in the institutions that are on the frontlines of providing Maryland's Black, Latino, and low-income students access to a higher education. We hope that the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee takes this testimony under consideration and gives SB 1043 a favorable report.

⁹https://www.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/fy_2018_budget_fact_sheets/HBCU_FactSht_Maryland_5-17D.pdf

¹⁰https://www.uncf.org/wp-content/uploads/PDFs/fy_2018_budget_fact_sheets/HBCU_FactSht_Maryland_5-17D.pdf

¹¹ <https://www.chronicle.com/article/They-Wanted-Desegregation/242930>