

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE (UMES)

**Testimony on Senate Bill 1043
(cross-filed with HB 1260)**



March 11, 2020

Testimony by

Dr. Heidi M. Anderson,

President UMES

**Given to: Senate Budget and Taxation and Education, Health and Environmental
Affairs Committees**

Chair Guzzone and Chair Pinsky and Members of the Budget and Taxation and Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committees.

As the 16th President of the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), on behalf of our UMES alumni, students, faculty and staff, I thank you for the opportunity to opportunity to appear before you today and respectfully ask for your support to pass Senate Bill 1043 (cross-filed with HB1260), Historically Black Colleges and Universities-Funding.

Further, I also wish to take a moment on behalf of the UMES family, to extend our heartfelt gratitude to both the House and Senate for your ongoing support of our university in previous years.

Chairmen and distinguished members of these Senate committees – thank you for this opportunity to - briefly explain - how your actions to pass SB 1043 will positively impact the lives of our students at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

On the bill, Senator Sydnor – thank you for your leadership in sponsoring Senate Bill 1043 and cross-filing it with HB1260, to a CALL TO ACTION NOW, which when passes will settle a malingering and debilitating issue adversely affecting UMES, its students, and our fellow Maryland HBCUs for decades.

I cannot tell you how much it means to me personally and would mean for our institution. A favorable vote of this committee will bring much overdue remedy to years of inadequate funding, capital improvements, renovations, and program development thus providing opportunities and a brighter future to our HBCU students now!

An influx of funding will fundamentally change the university in meaningful ways for years to come.

One, our students desperately need scholarship dollars to help them afford their educational journey. My first three priorities when I arrived at UMES 18 months ago, were – and still are – scholarships, scholarships and scholarships! As a first-generation college student myself, I know first-hand that not having scholarship money can quickly END an academic career.

Two, significant academic enhancements WILL be made to our array of programs so that UMES can become more competitive. We are the only 1890-Land Grant Doctoral Research institution in the State. We have strong programs in agriculture and health

care and STEM areas. We have a working farm on our campus where researchers are investigating all manners of animal health in feeding and growing. We are perfectly positioned to launch Maryland's first Veterinary School, which is a game changer for UMES and for the state of Maryland.

Three, Philanthropy. Unfortunately, UMES's fundraising department, whose mission is to maintain and grow our donors to raise scholarships for our students, is sadly a department of only 1 person.

This department is grossly understaffed and disadvantaged when competing on the State, National and International stage to recruit much needed donors to supplement our much appreciated state funding.

Fourth, our campus has endured years of deferred maintenance in order to make ends-meet. When I arrived, the library was closed because of a roof gone bad and a storm. Our campus experiences floods almost annually leaving damage in its wake. We have several dormitories not in use because they are gravely in need of repairs.

To underscore the legacy of UMES and HBCUs, we are proud of our Frederick Douglass Library, Ella Fitzgerald Performing Arts Center, and other African American leaders whose namesakes title our buildings. Funding from this bill will allow us to renovate these aging buildings, that have deteriorated into dire conditions. These much needed funds will allow UMES to modernize its aging infrastructure.

I encourage my team to be fiscally responsible. In our current state of reduced enrollment at UMES, we are committed daily to efficiency, and managing our financial affairs while adopting best practices to increase enrollment. The good news, resulting from UMES's team efforts across campus, provides a bright outlook for Fall 2020. And we **need** to be ready. Our facilities **need** to be competitive, we **need** to pursue donor support to realize our vision and offer scholarships to promising students to help close the economic gap for them.

And can you imagine, a Veterinary science school on Maryland's Eastern Shore?

Observations and Amendments for Committee's Consideration.

Recognizing that SB1043 is cross-filed with HB1260, I express gratitude to all whose leadership and efforts produced both bills, providing this timely and much needed solutions. Respectfully, I have some observations as noted below.

As written HB1260 proposed the following, my thoughts are included in bold print for your consideration. In addition, please consider modifying the bill regarding the following points:

1. A specific distribution or allocation of the funding.

Since it is unclear as to the criteria that was used to determine the allocations, therefore, I suggest using a standard, objective classification that is used in higher education to differentiate institutions. The Carnegie Classification® is the framework for recognizing and describing institutional diversity in U.S. higher education. It is a framework used to represent and control for institutional differences and in the design of research studies to ensure adequate representations institutions, students or faculty. Hence, using a well-established objective framework would allow for more straight-forward representation based on an existing standard.

2. Funding should be included in the base budget annually not in operating budget based on enrollment size.

The bill indicates that funding will be included in the operating budget for which the institution can count on it and work from and it is based on enrollment size. I suggest that funding is not based on enrollment size, instead using the Carnegie Classification® allows for an equitable distribution in the base annually. We will remain accountable and fiscally responsible with the way the funding is utilized.

3. Ensure Continuous funding.

Ensure that the funding cannot be pulled at any time in the future. To move forward with soft or questionable funds leaves us even more vulnerable than we are currently with little funding. We need to be able to count on the funds from year to year in whatever equitable distribution the state deems appropriate.

4. Hire a consultant to represent EACH institution – not one for all four.

The bill indicated that a consultant will be hired to help ‘the institutions.’ I am likely not alone in suggesting that a model having all four institutions rely on only one consultant would be inefficient and ineffective. Just as the bill adds five staff members to MHEC to handle the workload that will be produced by all of the new/existing academic program changes from our four HBCUs; only having one consultant for the four institutions will be a set up for failure. Further, each of

our four HBCUs in Maryland are very different. Especially since geographically UMES is so far away with a much different economy in the surrounding area, it is fiscally irresponsible to place all of the programmatic development under the oversight of one consultant. Please reconsider.

I appreciate your consideration and I would be available at your request to discuss these items and any ideas and possible amendments that may arise.

HBCUs are vitally important institutions.

Finally, HBCUs are vitally important institutions. While, HBCUs represent only 3% of colleges and universities in the U.S., we enroll 12% of all African American students. HBCUs produce 23% of all African American graduates, confer 40% of STEM degrees and 60% of all engineering degrees for African American students. According to the same data source, HBCUs educate 50% of African American teachers and 40% of African American health professionals. Seventy percent of African American dentists and physicians earned degrees at HBCUs. (Historically Black Colleges and Universities October 2015 data)

HBCUs disproportionately enroll low-income, first-generation and academically underprepared college students. These are the students who are the most at-risk for economic hardships, but also, with the achievement of a bachelor's degree are the most upwardly mobile, becoming productive contributors to society. More than 75% of HBCU students rely on Pell Grants. (Thurgood Marshall College Fund)

According to the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf), HBCUs institutions, have 1/8 of the average size of endowments than predominately white institutions (PWI), however they continue to provide an affordable education to millions of students of color graduating the majority of America's African American teachers, judges, engineers, and other STEM professionals.

In closing, I invite both of you, Chair Guzzone and Chair Pinsky, and the fellow members of your Senate Committee to visit with us anytime at UMES, meet our students and realize our potential. I respectfully request your vote and a "favorable report" for SB1043 HBCU Funding bill. Please, help us educate the next generation of Marylanders to be ready for our collective bright, and promising future, with the passage of SB1043.

Thank you!

Dr. Heidi M. Anderson, President UMES