



**SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Senate Bill 1033**

**Task Force to Study the Feasibility of a Bowie State University Law School**

**March 12, 2020**

*Favorable*

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 1033. SB 1033 would establish a task force to study the feasibility of a law school at Bowie State University. The university is open to exploring the idea of establishing a law school, building on a similar study that was undertaken nearly ten years ago.

With an enrollment of over 6,100 students, most of whom are Marylanders, and 60 percent from Prince George's County, Bowie State is already an attractive feeder institution for students interested in pursuing law degrees. Indeed, Bowie State students enrolled our popular criminal justice and history and government degree programs often enroll in law school. Bowie State also hosts law school placement testing on our campus. We are committed to offering excellent academic programs along with experiential learning opportunities to meet the needs of our students and prepare them for the workforce. Our proximity to major law firms and government agencies could be a significant benefit for students looking for job opportunities during and after they complete their legal studies.

Clearly, it is more economical for students in Prince George's County to pay in-state tuition to attend law school in Maryland, than to attend one of several private law schools nearby in the District of Columbia. Among many important operational, regulatory and economic questions, a feasibility study would explore whether it makes sense to offer Marylanders from Prince George's County and the region an in-state option that is closer to where they live and/or work. To the extent that the Washington-Baltimore region traffic is a concern for working students looking to attend law school in the evening, the university is fortunate to have a MARC train station on its campus which would support greater accessibility.

Bowie State University welcomes the opportunity to participate in this important conversation about expanding access to legal education in Maryland. We urge a favorable report for SB 1033.