



Student Homelessness
Initiative Partnership
of Frederick County

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SB 155 - SUPPORT

Testimony of Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP) of Frederick County In Support of SB 155

Higher Education – Tuition Exemption for Foster Care Recipients and Homeless Youth
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee • January 27, 2021

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 155, on behalf of the Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP) of Frederick County. SHIP believes in the power and positive impact of education that will alter the trajectory of a life. Operating at the intersection of education and homelessness, SHIP works to reduce barriers to academic attainment for youth experiencing homelessness and connect them to community, resources, youth-centric programming, while advocating for equity in the systems that serve young people.

SHIP of Frederick County supports SB 155 because it improves Maryland’s tuition exemption for youth experiencing homelessness in order to provide access to higher education and a pathway out of poverty for Maryland students. As a non-profit that works exclusively with unhoused students and youth, SHIP knows the impact of education as an intervention to end youth homelessness. Passing SB 155 is a critical step towards addressing educational inequities and securing more opportunities for our most vulnerable youth. With the passage of SB 155, we at SHIP know that more youth experiencing homelessness will have equal opportunity to engage in higher education, leading to more secure employment, housing, and overall stability. The passage of SB 155 is critical if we hope to end youth homelessness statewide.

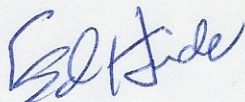


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SB 155 is consistent with other state laws that provide tuition exemptions for homeless youth, and will effectively address problems with Maryland's law.

SHIP of Frederick County strongly urges the committee to issue a Favorable Report on SB 155.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ed Hinde". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Ed Hinde,
Executive Director