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Maryland Independent College
and University Association

Written Support

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

House Bill 98 (Washington) – Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program – Alterations (Maryland College Access Act)

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March 18, 2021

On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the 65,600 students we serve, thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of ***House Bill 98 (Washington) – Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program – Alterations (Maryland College Access Act)***.

House Bill 98 would make permanent the college access pilot program that assists nonprofit organizations in facilitating low-income and minority students' college aspirations and provides annual appropriations through the State budget. Now more than ever, the outreach efforts to encourage students to enroll in a college or university is vital to their future aspirations and career goals. Every Maryland student should be provided support services to educate them on the various post-secondary educational opportunities that exist after high school. This program has been instrumental in increasing college access to low-income Maryland high school students and helping to complete a college education.

Our member institutions partner with nonprofit organizations that prioritize this student population, and they are eager to see this legislation pass to allow for long-term connections. MICUA students who have participated in this program highlight the outstanding college access support services that prepare them to matriculate into a higher education institution. Passage of the Maryland College Access Act and the dedicated funding create a permanent pipeline for families that desire additional services to access college and ensure the program's continued success.

For all of these reasons, MICUA requests a favorable Committee report for House Bill 98.

Testimony in Support of HB98.pdf

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ALONZO T. WASHINGTON
Legislative District 22
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB98 – Maryland College Access Act

HB98 repeals the sunset provisions of the Maryland Higher Education Outreach & College Access Program, and renames it as the Maryland College Access Act.

The Appropriations Committee established this program as a two-year pilot through legislation I proposed in 2015. It was then given an extension in 2018, and is now set to expire in 2021. This bill would simply extend the program permanently.

Following its establishment, the Governor funded the program with a \$250,000 appropriation that has been distributed to five non-profit agencies across the State. These agencies focus on outreach efforts to support and encourage low-income high school students to attend & complete college.

These grants have been used to fund workshops on college & career readiness, financial aid, college admissions and thousands of high school students across the State.

One of those non-profit organizations, First Generation College Bound, has aided 880 program participants in graduating with a college degree through this program:

Ph.D	3
Doctorate	13
Master's	140
Bachelor's	609
Associate's	115
Total	880

Getting admitted to a higher education institution is difficult for any student in Maryland, but especially those who have grown up under difficult circumstances. These nonprofits play a crucial role in assisting our young people in achieving their academic and career goals.

This program is incredibly important, because it creates opportunities for young people who would not have them otherwise. To ensure that these nonprofits can continue to provide these important services, I respectfully ask for a favorable report on HB98.

Testimony on HB 0098- Prince George's Community Co

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THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 0098– Maryland Higher Education Outreach and College Access Pilot Program - Alterations (Maryland College Access Act)

SPONSOR: Delegate Washington

HEARING DATE: 03/18/2021

COMMITTEE: Appropriations

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

Prince George's Community College **SUPPORTS House Bill 0098**, which repeals the termination date of the Maryland Higher Education Outreach and Access Pilot Program, requires the Governor to include in the annual budget bill a certain appropriation for the program, alters the title of the program, and alters the dates of a report associated with the program. One of the purposes of the program is to increase the number of low-income students attending and succeeding in college. This bill aids in the success and future success of Maryland students.

Prince George's Community College serves students that this bill seeks to assist. HB 0098 encourages low-income Maryland high school students to attend and complete college and to connect such students with nonprofit organizations that will assist the students in achieving their goal of attending college.

Our collective goal is to provide opportunity and access for every Maryland student to pursue their higher education goals. It is of the utmost importance to ensure that these students have the opportunity to take advantage of available resources. Every resource available to assist our students' path to postsecondary education that leads to degree completion or workforce skill enhancement is essential. This proposed legislation benefits both Maryland and our students. This legislation will make a difference.

For the reasons stated above, Prince George's Community College **SUPPORTS House Bill 0098** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.