

FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE BOUND



"Bridging the Home, Church, School and Community for Success"

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March 1, 2022

To Paul Pinsky Senate Chair and State Senators

I am writing on the behalf the First Generation College Bound and a member and Chair of Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity for the passage of SB501 Maryland Higher Education Commission – Procedures – Alterations submitted by Senator Sarah Elfreth. FGCB and members of Maryland Alliance recognize the need of the bill due to years of providing services to students, especially students of poverty with limited resources in schools and communities. While we are supportive of early notification of Financial Aid Awards due to College Decision Day, May 1st, we have concerns. While the bill was written for MHEC to notify students by April 15 or sooner for their financial aid awards, many Guarantee Access students who have applied or renewal will not be awarded. This is due to the time needed for processing required GA documents to be award and especially students who are on hold due to colleges waiting to receive their credits. It is important to note MHEC is unable to confirm renewal awards until mid to late summer due to the reporting of College Credits. All college are not reporting their credits as needed by MHEC. As a result GA students are challenged in registering for class due to late reporting of credits for MHEC to release the funds on time.

If All funds are to be dispersed before or by April 15th, many newly award and renewal GA students still being process will be wait listed or not funded. Recognizing this need I am requesting that funds be set aside for students who are still being processed and for students who are being renewed for the GA. As a result we are request that language in the bill be amended to reflect this need.

Sincerely,

Joseph A. Fisher
CEO & Founder

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