

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL
AFFAIRS
MARCH 2, 2022
SB501**

My name is Jennifer Covahey, I am the Director of College Success at the CollegeBound Foundation in Baltimore City and an alumna of the program. For over 30 years CollegeBound has helped Baltimore City public school students, like myself, navigate the path to and through college.

I write in support of SB 501. Currently, MHEC notifies all Delegate Rawlings awardees by May 1st. These awards range from \$3,000 to \$19,300 with Maryland private colleges matching the \$19,300 grant, totaling \$38,600 for private colleges. It would be extremely beneficial to students to change the notification date to April 15 for two reasons: (1) first, the date change would help our students make the best financial decision because May 1 – the current notification date -- is also national college decision day, the date by which students must commit to a college. Learning about the Delegate Rawlings award on the same day as decision day does not allow students enough time to compare their full financial aid packages between Maryland public and private colleges. (2) second, May 1 is when most colleges require students to pay enrollment and housing deposits which can be burdensome for families with limited financial means. But if a student wins the Rawlings Guaranteed Access Grant, the student can request the fees to be waived. Currently with the May 1st – deadline, students learn of their award and have to request a waiver the same day, which isn't enough time for colleges to approve. Therefore, a student may miss out on their top college choice and housing. Moving the date to April 15 will allow families additional time to request a waiver for enrollment and housing deposits.

For these two reasons, I ask that you vote in favor of Senate Bill 501 to move up the Delegate Rawlings notification date by two weeks to April 15th.

If there are any questions I can be reached at jcovahey@collegeboundfoundation.org or 410-262-4372. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you.

Jennifer Covahey
Director of College Success
The CollegeBound Foundation