



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

**Testimony by**

**Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director**

**March 2, 2022**

**SB 501 – Maryland Higher Education Commission – Procedures - Alterations**

**POSITION: Support**

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The Maryland Association of Community Colleges, representing Maryland's 16 public two-year institutions of postsecondary education, offer our support for SB 501 that will expedite the award process for recipients of the Howard P. Rawlings Educational Excellence Awards. Enactment of this legislation will also permit recipients of the Maryland Community College Promise Program to receive awards earlier.

The need to get award notifications to students in time to make decisions about their future is imperative for hundreds of students who must rely on financial aid to attend college. Students out of high school from low-income families are particularly vulnerable to the cost of college. If financial aid remains in question while decisions are being made by high school graduates about their future, students are likely to delay further training, placing them in unskilled jobs that will not pay a living wage. Timing is important for students making choices about their future. To notify students of financial aid after enrollment deadlines is inexcusable.

MACC supports this legislation and thanks Senators Elfreth, Pinsky, Rosapepe, and Washington for bringing this matter to the attention of the Committee. We urge a favorably report for SB 501 that will expedite the awarding process for recipients of the Howard P. Rawlings Educational Excellence Award and consequently allow recipients of the Maryland Community College Promise Program to be awarded in a more timely manner.