

**Committees:** Appropriations Committee

**Testimony on:** HB384

**Position:** Favorable

10 February 2023

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and the members of the Appropriations Committee,

The University of Maryland – College Park, Student Government Association supports HB384 that prohibits an institution of higher education from refusing to provide a current or former student with a transcript because the student owes a debt to the institution of higher education.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Caroline Thorne and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the University of Maryland Student Government Association. On behalf of the SGA, I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 248, which would end the practice of transcript withholding in the state of Maryland.

Former students need access to official transcripts to continue their education. They often serve as conditions of employment, or to gain an occupational license. Transcript holding is counterintuitive. It prevents former students from getting a job or furthering their education, which are steps they need to take in order to pay off the debt. Outside of repaying the debt, these individuals are unable to partake in the local economy to their fullest extent.

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, there are over 6.5 million people in the United States who have had their transcripts withheld for balances, with high shares of lower-income, black, hispanic and indigenous students victim to this practice. Transcript withholding disproportionately impacts these vulnerable populations, and holds them back from employment and further educational opportunities.

On behalf of University of Maryland's Student Government Association (SGA), I respectfully request a favorable vote on HB384, as this rectifies the burden.

Thank you,



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