

Committees: Education, Energy and the Environment

Testimony on: SB248

Position: Favorable

5 February 2023

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and the members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee,

The University of Maryland – College Park, Student Government Association supports SB248 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.

Currently, our nation is facing a student debt crisis. As the number of individuals attending college increases, so does the number of students in debt. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, student debt has more than doubled over the last two decades. The cost of college is increasing, making it more difficult for individuals to afford college without taking out loans. Being in debt is a sacrifice that many Americans make for the opportunity to attend a higher education institution, but this should not hinder their ability in the future.

This bill would enable equal opportunity for all students who have attended a higher education institution to pursue their goals, regardless of difficult financial circumstances. This is essential, as we prioritize equity for those seeking jobs, professional opportunities, further academic experiences, and more. A transcript request may be asked of applicants to a number of these positions and spaces, and not being able to request one would be a barrier to those who may have had difficulty affording higher education.

Not only would this bill prioritize equity, but it would prevent institutions of higher education from employing discriminatory treatment towards those who are in debt. We should be supporting individuals as they seek further career and academic growth, without the barrier of financial hardship.

With that, I respectfully request a favorable vote on SB248.

Thank you,



Meghana Kotraiah
University of Maryland — College Park,
mkotraia@umd.edu