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Office of the President

Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act – House Bill 352

House Appropriations Committee

Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Testimony Against the Bill Submitted by Dr. James Klauber

This proposed legislation disproportionately targets community colleges in reducing the percentage tie to USM. The funding mechanism created in the Cade Formula represents the equitable percentage between community college and Maryland universities. To permanently cut this percentage in a piece of BRFA legislation, without thought, research, or even deliberation among all the parties is nothing short of irresponsible.

With the passage of the Blueprint for Maryland’s future, community colleges are being asked to provide extensive dual credit pathways for high school students. These pathways are being provided with a legislatively mandated 25% reduction in tuition cost. Yet, community colleges have stepped up to provide these pathways for students and move Maryland forward in the implementation of the Blueprint.


Maryland’s community colleges are the “go to” entity when it comes to closing the skills gap in workforce shortages. Repeatedly, state and local government agencies, business, and industry reach out to their local community college for completers in workforce credentials, licensures, certificates, and apprenticeships. We have delivered on those requests. Despite national enrollment declines, community colleges have continued to produce more graduates annually. The services that we are able to provide our students with full Cade Formula funding can be directly tied to this success.

BRFA reductions will require students to pay higher tuition rates, driving many from choosing higher education at all. Affordability remains one of the biggest barriers to higher education nationwide. To implement these reductions will further push Maryland away from tuition equity compared to other states. These reductions, followed by certain tuition increases, will target those who are least able to afford them.

This BRFA legislation is poorly conceived. It prioritizes one segment of higher education over another, and will harm the institutions currently serving the most college students in Maryland.

I am happy to answer any questions on this legislation that you might have.

Yours truly,


James S. Klauber, PhD
President