



Cecil College
HB 352-Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2024
House Appropriations Committee
Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
TESTIMONY

Submitted by
Dr. Mary Way Bolt, President
Cecil College
February 26, 2024

Position: Oppose

Thank you for accepting testimony on the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) of 2024 which perpetuates the funding inequity for Maryland's community colleges. Funding prior to the formula indicated that from 1980 to 1993 (most recent data available in 1996 when the Cade formula was established), State aid to community college increased by 82% while State aid to public four-year institutions increased by 172%. The total difference between the statutory formula amount and the actual amount over those 27 years is a reduction of \$164 million plus another \$22 million for fiscal year 2025.

This proposed budget decreases state funding to Cecil College by 13% or \$1,058,855, a devastating recommendation that will cause irreparable harm to students who are desperately trying to attain or maintain a middle-class quality of life and earn a living wage. This budget is a not-so-subtle reminder of how the State truly feels about community colleges, as noted in the increased inequity in how the State funds higher education. We are asked to support dual enrolled students, educate healthcare workers, public safety workers, skilled trades, ABE/GED, and many more: all of whom are the Marylanders that we educate to fill Maryland jobs. The State needs to support community colleges and maintain the 29% funding per FTES and reject all the language in the BRFA, especially the cuts in perpetuity.

Please fully restore the Cade funding formula. When fully funding the Cade formula, the State supports equitable access to higher education for all Marylanders. But by rebasing one formula, the State effectively prioritizes one segment over the other. The actions included in the BRFA impact students who are the most vulnerable and are struggling to succeed. This is an issue of equity and inclusion in regard to access to the higher education that results in a better quality of life for our communities and a stronger economic outcome for the state.

I urge you to reject the BRFA and fully restore the Cade funding formula. Maryland is open for business because community colleges are educating the workforce.

Office of the President

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