

**House Appropriations Committee
Testimony by
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director
February 6, 2024**

**HB 427 - Higher Education - Community College Facilities Renewal Grant
Program - Alterations**

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, thanks Delegate Jones for her sponsorship of HB 427, which would expand the Facilities Renewal Grant to all 16 community colleges and ensure equitable funding across our campuses.

MACC is grateful to the General Assembly for realizing the importance and significance of the Facility Grant Renewal Program. While these achievements should not be understated, prior budgetary constraints have led to a continued backlog of deferred maintenance projects currently totaling more than \$115 million.

These projects include roof repairs, window, door, and boiler replacements, and even electrical upgrades. Given the age of our buildings, continued deferral can lead to increased costs in the long run. Failure to repair these or similar systems can also lead to disastrous environmental and health issues. In addition, completing these repairs at the expense of instructional funding is not a sustainable solution, and our colleges have avoided increasing tuition to pay for them, creating a substantial backlog.

The current Facilities Renewal Grant program only allows half of the colleges to receive funding in a given year. Due to the percentage tie to the CIP of the Construction Grant Program, there are annual fluctuations that have led to unequal distributions of funds year over year.

HB 427 is crucial in addressing these issues and ensuring that all community colleges in Maryland have access to the necessary funding to maintain safe and healthy learning environments for our students. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** vote on **HB 427**.