

**House Appropriations Committee
Testimony by
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director
February 13, 2024**

HB 569 - Higher Education - Credit Eligibility and Transfer of Credits - English as a Second Language Courses (Credit for All Language Learning (CALL) Act)

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges strongly supports **HB 569**, which seeks to provide further opportunities for students to use English as a Second Language (ESL) courses to obtain degrees and/or transfer to higher education institutions.

Community colleges often serve as the entry point to higher education for many Maryland students, including English language learners (ELL). When ESL classes taken at community colleges are not transferrable, ELL students face significant barriers when trying to continue their education at four-year institutions. Language acquisition is a gradual process that requires continuity and consistency.

Transferrable ESL credits ensure that these students can seamlessly continue their language development when transitioning to a four-year institution and have a clear pathway to pursue further education. This continuity of learning is essential for these students' academic progress and overall success in higher education.

Requiring ESL classes to be transferrable to four-year institutions in the state helps ensure equitable access to higher education while supporting diverse student populations. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** vote on **HB 569**.