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Judiciary Committee

Subcommittees

Civil Law and Procedure

Public Safety



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Mark Chang, and esteemed members of the Appropriations committee:

It is my pleasure to testify in support of **House Bill 1522**-The Land-Grant Equity and Accountability Act, which addresses the historical disparity in funding that caused a severe monetary shortfall for the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES).

This is a priority bill for the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore is a public 1890 land-grant and Historically Black University that embraces diversity- opening to Black students to study agriculture on Sept. 13, 1886.

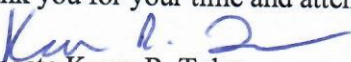
Indicated in the letter jointly issued by the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Agriculture on September 18, 2023- the Second Morrill Act of 1890 mandated states to establish a second land-grant institution in Maryland for Black students to ensure equity in education and funding between 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions. Federal legislation was successfully enacted to support historically Black institutions that offered instruction in agriculture and related fields; however, it is important to note that many States in our Union (not just Maryland) have failed to comply with the Second Morrill Act of 1890. Yet, in Maryland we LEAD which is why I am asking this committee to right this wrong and **favorably support HB1522**.

The University of Maryland- Eastern Shore, the 1890 Land Grant Intuition here in Maryland produces extraordinary graduates who contribute their expertise to our economy and is the fabric of our State and Nation. UMES is home to one of the top Pharmacy Schools in the Country, as well as other stellar academic programs. House Bill 1522 seeks to rectify the funding disparity that has persisted from *at least* 1987 through 2020 (when data was first calculated) by requiring the Governor to appropriate at least *five million dollars* annually in the State's budget until an adequate amount is reached.

It is important to note that if UMES had received the same level of State funding per student as the 1862 Land grant institution- the University of Maryland, College Park during this period, an additional \$321,181,312 would have been available for UMES.

This legislation aims to address the historical inequities and promote fairness in funding for Maryland's only 1890 Land Grant Institution-The University of Maryland-Eastern Shore. The great Marylander Thurgood Marshal said, "*a good education is the key to unlocking the potential within each child*"- I say that begins with proper funding. I look forward to a favorable report for **HB1522**.

Thank you for your time and attention,


Delegate Karen R. Toles