

SB407_MACC_FAV_B Phillips.pdf

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Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Testimony by Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director

January 31, 2024

SB 407 - Community College – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment

POSITION: Support

On behalf of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, we support this legislation and thank Senator McKay for sponsoring this bill. This legislation will align statute for community colleges already in statute for libraries and public schools by offering the same adjustment in State and local match formulas.

The General Assembly passed the Build to Learn Act during the 2020 Legislative Session, which enabled certain counties to use the match rate for neighboring jurisdictions for capital projects and last year, HB 1249 allowed for libraries to benefit from the same adjustment. This bill also uses the same language that provides for a State share adjustment to be applied to community colleges as well.

Even though the legislation is Statewide, the community college that will most likely benefit from the adjustment is Garrett College. Garrett County still has a 50-50 match rate for community colleges. Garrett County is a rural county with a median household income that is below the bottom quartile of the State. At issue is the wealth generated by vacation homes around Deep Creek Lake, which distorts the current State matching formula for the community college.

Aligning the State share for community colleges with what is already permissible for public schools and libraries will help Garret College provide the state-of-the-art facilities needed to grow the region's economy and increase the higher education attainment rate.

MACC requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 407.

SB407.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

MIKE MCKAY
Legislative District 1
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 416
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3565 · 301-858-3565
800-492-7122 Ext. 3565
Mike.McKay@senate.state.md.us

Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Senate Bill 407 – Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment

January 28, 2024

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee,

The purpose of the bill is to increase the State share for the Community College Construction Grant Program. This would be most beneficial to the counties that I represent as it is a heavy burden upon them when capital projects are undertaken. Garrett and Allegany Counties are two of the smallest counties in the state that support community colleges and as such do not have the tax revenue to support 50% of the cost. The increase will be a significant assistance to Garrett Community College and I ask for a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike McKay".

Senator Mike McKay

Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland

Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

SB0407_GarrettCollege_R.Midcap.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard Midcap

Position: FAV

Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

**Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 0407
Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment**

**Dr. Richard Midcap, President
Garrett College
January 31, 2024**

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) oversees the Community College Construction Grant Program (CCCGP). The state share complies with the cost-sharing provisions in Title 11-105 (j) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. Based on that formula, the State contributes between 50 and 75% of each capital project, with the home county (or counties) responsible for the remainder of the funding.

Senate Bill 0407 would amend 11-105 (j) to provide an adjustment to the formula for counties in the bottom quartile of median household income that currently receive 50% state funding for community college capital projects. The local share would be reduced to equal the local share of the adjacent county that is less than 50% but closest to 50%.

While “Garrett College” is found nowhere within SB 0407’s language, I freely admit that I strongly support this bill because of the dramatic impact it would have on our ability to undertake capital projects at my college. The 50% local share currently required for Garrett College projects is an extremely heavy lift for Garrett County. We are – by far – the smallest jurisdiction in the state with a single county supporting a community college. As a frame of reference, Garrett County has about 29,000 residents. The next-smallest counties supporting community colleges are Allegany County (approximately 71,000 residents) and Cecil County (approximately 100,000 residents).

The change, if implemented for projects starting in Fiscal Year 2026, would permit Garrett County to obtain the same 67.9% state share as neighboring Allegany County. Such a change would significantly improve our prospects for future capital projects. If this adjustment is approved, the local share on a \$10 million capital project at Garrett College would drop from \$5 million to \$3.3 million. For my college, this bill could be the difference between moving forward or delaying our next capital project.

I’m pleased to say our request has overwhelming support. The Maryland Association of Community Colleges’ Council of Presidents voted unanimously support this bill. The Garrett County Commissioners and the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce are also formally supporting SB 0407.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony. I hope after careful consideration this committee will endorse SB 0407.