

**SB362**  
**Aid to Community Colleges**  
**Yolanda Wilson, President, College of Southern Maryland**  
**Unfavorable Report**  
**February 29, 2024**

The proposed fiscal year 2025 Maryland state budget includes the fourth-largest cut to community colleges in the history of the Cade Funding formula. Sadly, the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) rebases the Cade formula from 29% per FTES to 26.5%. According to the calculations in the BRFA, the College of Southern Maryland would receive a **6.2% reduction** from the previous year and many of our sister community colleges would receive double digit decreases. **The impact on the College of Southern Maryland is more than \$1.3 million.** As president of the College of Southern Maryland, I request that the Cade Funding Formula be fully restored for Maryland's community colleges.

The latest National Student Clearinghouse Research Center report, released in September, revealed community colleges are leaders in higher education enrollment growth. Not only did community college enrollment rise nationwide for the first time in more than a decade last Spring – by 8% in Maryland and by 3% at CSM – this trend continues at CSM with each subsequent semester, reflecting CSM's first consistent enrollment increase in five years. CSM has worked diligently in creating opportunities to expand access to CSM, ensure momentum while at CSM, and to bolster mobility for our students. This has included improving workforce programs, offering flexibility in schedules and online courses, and focusing on student retention and intrusive advising. Cutting Cade funding in such a time of growth will stretch the budget further with less funding for more students.

Serving Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties, the College of Southern Maryland is able to respond nimbly to our 14,329 credit and noncredit students and their success **fairly, efficiently, strategically, and equitably** according to their needs regardless of their campus location because of the support that we receive at our state and county levels. In fact, our students are very fluid, moving between campuses. Almost 45% of students attend two or more locations and another 32% take online classes. CSM has 11 online programs of study, and more than 26,000 enrollments just in online courses. This growth is possible due to the ability to assign resources and costs to a virtual campus tied to all three counties.

Supporting the Maryland Association of Community College's operating request at the state level to fully fund the Cade Funding Formula at 29% funding per FTEs is critical to maintain this momentum for Southern Maryland's students. It is imperative to reject all language in the BRFA, especially cuts in perpetuity. As a community college, student success, academic excellence, and financial and operational efficiency are our core expectations, and we look to the state to fulfill their commitment in fully funding the state's community colleges.

Yolanda S. Wilson  
President, College of Southern Maryland