

LETTER #1

I'm Max, and I'm a community college student, attending CCBC. Could I please have a moment of your time to read my letter?

In 1998, the Cade formula was passed into law, requiring that community colleges are given 29 cents for each dollar universities are given. After 24 years, community colleges finally received the full funding required by the Cade formula. For the past 2 years, the funding for community colleges has met the standard set by the Cade formula.

However, community college funding now is going down again (from 29 cents to 26 cents per dollar that universities receive). Meanwhile, university funding is being raised by 5%, even though Maryland universities serve only half as many students as Maryland community colleges.

The president of CCBC hasn't raised tuition in five years. Sadly, this budget cut will force the college to raise tuition.

Even charging an **extra \$18 per credit** adds up:

$\$18 * 3 \text{ credits} * 5 \text{ classes} = \text{extra } \270 per semester for each student.

According to [Forbes](#), a person with an associate's degree makes \$400,000 more over their lifetime than someone with a high school diploma (and bear in mind, the extra \$400,000 is taxable income). Since community colleges are less costly, often closer to students, and easier to access (CCBC has 100% acceptance rate), maintaining current community college funding would make an associate degree more readily available to all.

I care greatly about working hard, doing my best, and having a career that helps make my area of the world a little better. I strive very hard for good grades, and I'm very fortunate to be able to attend community college nearly for free through scholarships based upon my GPA. This may not be available if my community college has less funding.

My parents' jobs are commission-based, so their income fluctuates throughout the year. Money is tight right now, and it's a huge blessing that I'm able to go to CCBC with these scholarships, as I'm using all my time to focus on college.

Please consider returning funding to and investing in community colleges, in our future. In my future.

Thank you.

LETTER #2

February 25, 2024
Kyle Clarke Echeverria
125 Versailles Cir Apt F
Towson MD 21204

In 1998, the Senator John Cade funding formula was enacted to ensure equitable funding for Maryland's community colleges, a promise that took 24 years to fully realize. Recently, Budget Secretary Helene Grady has suggested reducing this funding, citing a decline in enrollment—a view that overlooks the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on our students and the vital role these institutions play. I am writing to advocate for the increase of the Cade Formula funding, emphasizing its necessity for the sustainability and accessibility of community college education in our state. At the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) I have shaped my education around a curriculum which heavily emphasizes class discussions, collaboration, and self-discovery. I have fully immersed myself in the opportunities at the college to enhance my educational journey. The communities found at CCBC bring together a group of students who support each other and collectively strive toward personal growth. This inclusive environment allowed me to flourish and completely transformed me into the scholar and leader I am today. The college introduced me to many works of literature, which led me to pursue research independent studies in the program. These independent studies focused on literature containing Afrofuturism and queer themes in literature. As an aspiring writer, these courses introduced me to many foundational works that will influence my writing and improve my understanding of the genres in the literary world. The opportunities I have been given have served as a catalyst for my development as a scholar. The countless opportunities presented to me completely changed my educational pathway. Their support and my focus on academics led me to be accepted into a research program at Johns Hopkins. At Hopkins, I refined my scholarly abilities and created an independent research project that I presented at an undergraduate conference. These experiences and goals were all thanks to CCBC's community, who believed in me and allowed me to succeed. This path of self-discovery and growth went beyond my studies. As I became more involved in the college, I wanted to contribute to its mission of preparing students for transfer and career success. In the fall semester of 2023, I became involved in several leadership roles at the college. Because of my roles, I was able to craft events to motivate students to excel in community college and help them with their transfer journey. I encouraged students to take multiple courses that focused on critical thinking. I had the initiative to have a course registration fairs so students could familiarize themselves with the professors' teaching courses and the topics discussed in the classroom. The goal was to familiarize students with the curriculum and get them to enroll in the classes. I want to introduce students to the same opportunities I had through my community college and encourage them to continue their academic journey and complete it successfully. Currently, I am supporting my classmates by organizing several panel presentations for our student conference.

Several classmates and I will present the research projects we did for our courses. I encouraged them to present their scholarly work to refine their research and public speaking skills. I find joy in helping others succeed, and I am very grateful for the support and community that pushed me to excel in my academics and beyond. I want to see my peers have opportunities like I did. I want to see my peers thrive as I have thrived in the Community College of Baltimore County. But unfortunately, without adequate funding my peers will be uneducated and many of them will be forced to leave the community college due to the budget cuts and tuition increases. The community college fosters values in its students that they will take outside the classroom and make out community a better place. Community colleges are responsible of removing the barriers of entry to higher education and by reducing the funding it will have detrimental impacts in our community. It would be a disservice shut the doors on these students the future scholars, leaders, and innovators of this generation. I am writing to ask you to please increase the Cade formula and allow these students to thrive. Sincerely, Kyle Clarke Echeverria

LETTER #3

My name is Katie Piunti, I am a student at the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC). I am writing to inform you of the impacts the Cade Funding Formula has on my education. I have been a dual-enrolled student for Two years however, without the Cade Funding

I would have not been able to seek a better education. Many families like my own have struggled financially over the past few years after the impact of Covid. Without the Cade Funding Formula, my Family would not have been able to afford for me to be able to take classes at CCBC. My experience at CCBC has opened my eyes to new ideas, creativity, and has allowed me to express myself. Through CCBC I have been able to explore my options and not feel rushed to decide a major. I have also experimented in different classes to help get an insight on different career options I will have in the future. Without the Cade Funding none of this would have ever been possible for me. Through CCBC I have found my passion, all possible with the Cade Funding Formula. With recent talk of possible reducing the funding community colleges will receive, I am worried for future students, and all who seek higher education. Community College allows students to explore different life paths, save money, and reach a new level of education. If the funding cut was put into place many students like me would not be able to have the opportunities, they seek a higher education. Going into CCBC two years ago, I was worried it would not be a good fit for me. However, it was an eye-opening experience that has impacted my life greatly. I always thought I would go down a path that led to medical school. However, after experimenting with classes and new ideas, I am not on a pre-law path. Without CCBC I would have never even thought of a law career. Through CCBC I was able to take classes like poli-sci, criminal justice, etc.

I would have never had these opportunities if dual enrollment wasn't an

option. With all that being said, I hope you have a new viewpoint on how the Cade Funding Formula is important to many students, and how impactful it can be on education.

Thank you,

Katie Piunti

Student of the Community College of Baltimore

kkpiunti@yahoo.com

LETTER #4

My name is Taylor Finch, and I am a resident of Maryland. I am also a current student at the Community College of Baltimore County. And I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the Cade funding formula budget decrease. The proposed budget cuts to the Cade formula will undoubtedly negatively affect many Baltimore residents.

The purpose of community college is to make higher education more accessible and affordable to all citizens. Being a student at the Community College of Baltimore County has impacted my life in ways that I never could have imagined. Indeed, CCBC is a learning institution however, it is more than just a place for learning. I have found a community at CCBC that I have not found anywhere else. Through CCBC, I have learned valuable skills and have found numerous work opportunities. I am a Goldman Sachs fellow because CCBC partnered with the company. I have since become a student leader at CCBC and strive to make it a more inclusive and mentally stimulating environment. Furthermore, professors' attention and care for their students at CCBC may be unrivaled. Class sizes at CCBC are small and honors classes are even smaller. This allows students to get to know their professors and receive more personalized assignment feedback. Moreover, community colleges are invaluable in today's society. The cost of living has risen in recent years, yet community colleges are still an option for many due to low tuition.

Universities and colleges do deserve money however, do community colleges like CCBC have to suffer? Most of the students that attend CCBC plan on transferring to 4-year institutions. However, by defunding community colleges, they may be unable to attend a 4-year institution. University and college are investments that many students may not be able to make upfront community colleges give these students the flexibility they need to earn their associate's and bachelor's at an affordable price. Additionally, "Each year, Maryland's community colleges enroll a diverse population of nearly 500,000 students. – 150,000 in credit programs and 350,000 in continuing education and workforce development courses" (Community College Month). Decreasing funding for community college budgets could adversely affect the futures of hundreds of thousands of Maryland residents.

I hope that you realize the Cade funding formula is important to college students and those who are working to receive a certification or license. Maryland is a well-educated state however in time that may change if community colleges lack the funding they deserve. House Bill 350 has the potential to positively or negatively impact my life and the lives of others depending on your decisions.

Thank you for considering my views. I look forward to your response.

Taylor Finch Phone number: (443) 653-2841 email: fi1071978@email.ccbcmd.edu

LETTER #5

Dear delegates of the people of Baltimore,

My name is Leslie Vicioso, and I'm current student at Community College of Baltimore County. It is important to me to graduate because on that way I will have a better job and develop a career

as a doctor later. I see CCBC as the beginning of a promising future. Even if I start from scratch to build a good career. This impacts me in many ways, and one of them is how each day, they allow me to study without having to worry about not being able to pay for my classes. I am very grateful for this because I believe that receiving a quality education is a great opportunity for everyone, including me. Because it allows me to grow personally and academically acquiring all the necessary tools to be a great professional. Another reason is the resources and other opportunities they give me, such as having transportation between campuses and having a good laptop to study that was donated by CCBC for belonging to the honor students. Also, being able to help other students to know all the resources that CCBC has.

Thanks for read,

Sincerely,

Leslie

LETTER #6

Dear Mrs. Adrienne Jones,

REF: Cade Formula Increment Proposition

The purpose of my writing of this letter is to humbly request for increment of the Cade Formula to the Community College of Baltimore County. My name is Fidel Jonathan Okaya, I am an international student at the Community College of Baltimore County, pursuing an undergraduate degree in political science. My home country is Kenya. I am currently on my third semester at the institution, having arrived in the country in October of 2022 on a visitor's visa. During my period as a mere tourist, I was amazed at the level of infrastructure here in Maryland, this attracted me to wanting to know more about this great country. I subsequently applied for a student visa which thankfully, was approved. Life from where I am from is much different to life here in the United States of America, we as Kenyans have a long way to go to come anywhere near the level of the United States when it comes to infrastructure and economy.

The state of Pennsylvania alone, is bigger than the whole of Kenya in terms of size. The state of Pennsylvania has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$975 billion. Kenya has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$278 billion as of now. Nonetheless, the Kenyan

government allocates 27% of its budget on education, with \$1.3billion going to university education. This amount is divided among the public universities, which are owned by the state. Additionally, the government allocates some funds to university and college students under a program known as Higher Education Loans Board (HELB), which was established in July of 1995, it is a state corporation in the ministry of education, HELB's mission is to provide sustainable finance to Kenyans pursuing higher education. How HELB works is that the government pays a portion of an applicant student's university fees, be it in private or public universities. The applicant is obliged to repay the state upon completing education, this fee is deducted from one's pay upon beginning employment, the rate of deduction is agreed upon during the application. Education is very important to me in terms of acquiring knowledge and using that knowledge to change my personal life, my country and the world at large for the better. The Community College of Baltimore, being where i study, has, and always will have, a special place in my heart. To me, allocation of funds to learning institutions ought to be a top priority, given the importance of education to individual living standards and to the economy.

Sincerely,

Fidel Okaya,

CCBC student.

LETTER #7

Subject: Support for increasing Cade Formula for Maryland Community Colleges

Dear Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

I am writing this letter to share with you my personal story and to urge your support for increasing funding for Maryland community colleges through the Cade Formula. As a temporary resident of Maryland and an international student on student visa, I have experienced firsthand the transformative and positive impact community college have on individuals and communities.

Growing up in a simple household, access to a higher education in a foreign country is a huge privilege. It almost seemed like a distant dream. However, CCBC has provided me

with an affordable tuition, flexible class schedules, and a supportive learning environment. They came as a lifeline for me. Thanks to CCBC, I am able to pursue my educational goals as an international student.

CCBC is not only providing me with academic knowledge but also equipping me practical skills and real-world experiences through hands-on learning initiatives. The highly dedicated faculty and staff at CCBC are investing in my success, offering mentorship, and guidance every step of the way.

CCBC serves as a hub of diversity and inclusion, bringing together individuals from all walks of life and creating a vibrant community of learners. The motivation and continuous guidance I have received at CCBC have enriched my life and broadened my perspectives. It has fostered a sense of belonging and acceptance for me as an international student in a new country.

However, the recent proposed cuts to community college funding threaten to undermine the invaluable work being done at institutions like CCBC. Budget Secretary Helen Grady's assertion that community colleges do not require as much funding due to enrollment declines fails to consider the numerous challenges faced by students, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many international students, like myself, have faced additional obstacles due to travel restrictions and financial hardships, making the support provided by community colleges even more critical during these times.

Furthermore, it is deep to see that while community colleges face cuts, the university system is sure to receive a budget increase. This disparity in funding allocation not only

perpetuates inequality but also jeopardizes the accessibility and affordability of higher education for Maryland residents and international students like myself.

I urge you to consider the stories of individuals like myself who have benefited from the opportunities provided by community colleges. Increasing funding for Maryland community colleges through the Cade Formula is not just an investment in education; it is an investment in the future of the state and the potential talents in the students.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I hope you will be able to support for strengthening the Cade Formula in the upcoming legislative session.

Sincerely,

Samik Gahatraj

7201 Rossville Boulevard

Baltimore, Maryland, 21237

LETTER #8

My name is Aminah Anderson, I live in the 21228 zip code and I've been attending CCBC in total, for about 3 years now. CCBC has allowed me to graduate high school in 3 years. I first began taking classes at CCBC online in August of 2021. I took one class fall semester and then another in the spring to get the last required credits I would need to graduate. I graduated in the spring of 2022, 1 year early and then I started attending CCBC full time in fall of 2022.

Graduating early allowed me to get a "head start" on my college education which at the time was what I felt like really mattered, more so than taking an additional year in high school. I was able to have more free time because I was not in school all day, as I was used to from my previous 11 years in grade school. I was able to spend my time doing more of the things I enjoy like working, spending time with family and picking up hobbies.

When I became a full-time student at CCBC, unlike a lot of college students I was able to do so without taking out student loans. For many families loans are not an option, CCBC allowed for me to receive the college education I felt so important while not having to worry about debt. In addition, living away from home in a dorm was something I did not want, even if it was only 20 minutes away from my family home. I value and enjoy my family a lot and being able to still be around them during these challenging couple of years has been essential on my road to success. Being away from them would've made my college experience extremely difficult.

Coming to CCBC I initially I didn't know what I wanted to study but I did have an idea. I chose political science because government always interested me in school, it was my favorite subject. Being able to go to a school with the most affordable prices available for a higher education lessened the stress of choosing a major. I didn't feel the anxiety of choosing the wrong one and risk being set back significantly financially and academically.

CCBC has prepared me for my next 2 years of college at a university and well as graduate school. In a way I feel CCBC allowed me to gradually experience the college and adult lifestyle. It was a good middle period between grade school and going to a 4-year university.

My experience at CCBC over the last 2 years that I've had in person classes has been good. All of my teachers have been helpful and take their job seriously. If I was ever having an issue, they tried their best to accommodate me. I've also used services on campus, such as the advisors and they have also been helpful. They have assisted me in laying out a course plan for my time at CCBC ensure I stay on track to graduate. Getting in to speak to one has never been a hassle either. I've also used some of the library resources for help on papers and overall everybody has given me the help I needed. CCBC has allowed me to have the most stress-free college experiences a student can ask for.

Sincerely,

Aminah Anderson

LETTER #9

Dear Maryland Senate,

I am writing to express my deep worry and concern regarding the proposed budget cuts for community colleges in Maryland. As a current student at Community College of Baltimore County, I am a witness to the invaluable roles many of the parties on campus provide. For example, the free tutoring, student support services and the food lockers and pantry for toiletries. As someone who benefits from all the extra help provided by the proposed budget cut it has me concerned. These budget cuts would undoubtedly have detrimental effects on my education and the education of countless others.

First and foremost, budget cuts would result in reduced course offerings and that means increased class sizes. Not only would that overwhelm teachers but also introverted students like me. Imagine how disruptive a large class could be. This would also create enrollment challenges, limited availability of courses and more. The longer we stay in college, the more of a financial burden we will be.

Next, budget cuts could lead to the decline of education and support services offered by the school. Some of the essential resources that matter to me are tutoring support, academic advising, and counseling services. Without these support systems, students alike will struggle to succeed academically. There have been times I was so hungry that I could not concentrate without being able to afford lunch. I go to the food pantry and grab a soup or raviolis to hold me over so that I can focus. But that is at the bottom of the hierarchy of basic needs.

Additionally, budget cuts could impact the availability of extracurricular activities and enrichment programs. These enhance overall college experiences and contribute to students' personal development. These opportunities play a vital role in fostering a sense of community and welcoming.

Lastly, budget cuts could affect financial aid. The only reason I can attend school and fulfill my dreams is financial aid. If funding is cut, I may never be able to afford my schooling. Between the FAFSA and scholarships, that is how me and several others are able to attend. If you are worried about attendance, cutting our budget will most certainly not help attendance. Without financial aid students may be taking on financial debt.

In conclusion, the proposed budget cuts for community colleges pose a significant threat to the accessibility, affordability, and quality of education for students like me. I urge you to reconsider these cuts and prioritize investments in community colleges to ensure all students can pursue their educational aspirations and success.

Sincerely, Autumn L. Anderson CCBC Student Class of 2025

LETTER #10

On Behalf of myself and my fellow Community College of Baltimore County students House Bill 350 effects more than just the fiscal budget. My, like many other college student's academic careers have been admittedly stressful. Not only do most students going to work often working full-time positions they also sign up for a fulltime course load in order to graduate on time. Some are parents or expectant parents. Others are caretakers, nurses and even themselves require extensive care. Bills, mortgages and loans and stack up. And sometimes it seems like there isn't enough time in a week let alone a day.

With the outside pressure to keep afloat in our current socio – economic environment one crucial thing that must be preserved is schooling. As frustrating as classes can be and as tiresome essays can seem, the reward of a quality education can't be replaced. Whether it's an education for trades to starting the long process of more esteemed degrees every degree is important. Each professional in the job market currently, before and after had to start somewhere and one of the most assured/safest routes is services like community college.

Cutting funding harms so many Americans professionally, socially, and economically. With Maryland's long history of being a state instilled with change and progress it seems like a regression to cut off a major source of valuable intellectual currency. The social climate of America not only on the sides of experts in the industry mourning the lack of attention and care required for teaching but the students themselves have shown a decrease in retention and learning. Education resources are stretched thin enough and it only has to start small in order to create a larger problem.

I hope you can at least give some consideration to the people who really rely on community colleges like CCBC and increase resources helping to fund our colleges' necessary work. Thank for your time and rumination.

LETTER #11

Hello, my name is Ethan Holland. I am here to talk about the issue with cutting the budget of community college. CCBC is a big part of my life. I have met a bunch of new people and new friends. I am a part of the baseball team at CCBC Essex. This has led me to new friendships that I wouldn't never imagined. For example, I have friends who live in Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and Japan. I would have never met these people if it wasn't for the diverse aspect I get while playing baseball at a community college. If we cut the budget one problem will be we can't have as many people on the sports teams. The cost for food, jerseys, etc will be too much to carry as many people as we carry now. So that takes away opportunities for friendships and other things. Another thing is, a lot of my friends on the team don't have that much money so they

have to do work study. If the budget gets cut the school won't be able to afford as many students for work study. This will cause other problems. How is the student supposed to afford things like groceries now? A lot of the students on the sports teams are not from here, including myself. So we have to stay in apartments right beside the school. We have to buy many things like our groceries. If you cut the budget you are taking opportunities away from students to get money.

The student athlete cannot work an outside job. CCBC works around your schedule because they know you are an athlete. Work study is a big thing and it is important for student athletes.

What will happen to these kids when they have to get a job? They won't be able to do both.

Working a job and being a student athlete. They can only pick 2 of the three things to accomplish. There are many negative things that will happen as the result of cutting the budget.

These will affect me the most. I suggest keeping the budget the same or even increasing it to help our students be successful. Graduating from a community college before going to a 4 year school is important because it helps us understand the load

and responsibilities while still giving us

some free time. I don't think cutting the budget will help at all. In conclusion, CCBC affects me in many ways and it is a big part of my life and my future. I have met many new people here and this college has taught me a lot of new things. Do not cut the budget because it will not help anything only make things worse. Trust me an actual student who sees everything happen on a

LETTER #12

Hello to whomever this may be read by, my name is Robert Tilghman Levering and I am currently a student at CCBC Essex Community College as a freshman. I was previously a student at Concordia Preparatory School in Towson Maryland, I was never the best student when it came to grades but nevertheless I have the drive to be successful. CCBC was one of the only schools I applied to because of my grades. This school is my chance to be successful. I am 18 years old with the desire to be able to provide for myself and my future family. The Cade Formula lowering of funding I think should not be lowered. Students like me rely on institutions like CCBC to be able to have a chance in today's world financially, and for me, the only chance to make it to a 4 year college like Towson University. The lowering of the budget could result in anything from as little as a few less bathrooms or vending machines at some locations, to as severely as certain campuses being closed or reduced. People like me rely on schools like these to be able to hope on creating a future for ourselves and our children. I am lucky enough to have found CCBC where I can commute and learn, but after the reduction of funding some people in the future like me may not be lucky enough to have a location to be able to go to and will be left without the education they strive to have. I request this budget not be lowered as the results to some may just be numbers and statistics but to others this is "life or death" for one's future; for them and their families. Thank You for Your Time. - Robert Tilghman Levering

LETTER #13

Dear Maryland State Government,

I am writing this letter regarding the proposed cutting of CADE funding. Since 1998 the current CADE formula has been aiding many low-income community college students. Underfunding of education will cause an economic impact. Cutting this fund will impact many students statewide in ways we have yet to fully know.

Many students cannot afford to fund a college education on their own. Education funding depends on the state and local resources, with only a small share coming from the federal government. Districts in high-poverty areas, mainly serving students of color, receive less funding for students than districts in low-poverty areas that predominantly serve white students. This inequality already promotes a disadvantage to certain individuals looking to further their education.

Cuts to the CADE fund will further harm these individuals and others in many ways.

Underfunding education can devastate local communities and their economy as a whole. Parents will not be able to obtain decent paying jobs if they are able to continue their education leading to difficulty hardship in obtaining after school childcare to help with troubled communities. Job markets will be impacted as well. Many careers that can enable an individual to successfully provide for their families require a background in college education. Many unnecessary vacancies for important positions will need to be filled causing a ripple effect on economic growth.

I ask that you take my letter into consideration and allow for measures to be taken to protect the CADE formula.

Sincerely, Mak Petion.

LETTER #14

I think it's sad that I must write this letter but it's one that I won't hesitate to do. In my political science course, we were told that community colleges in my home state of Maryland will be receiving cuts to fundings, cuts that will result in students not getting the proper resources they need to be the very best. I find that this issue has touched a nerve for me. I in no way would be in the position I am in life without the programs, environment, and opportunities that community college has given to me. It's a privilege to be able to attend school. It's an opportunity that most kids my age doesn't get a chance to do. Especially for my family, I'm one of the first boys in 3 generations to attend college. My Grandfather grow up with very little money and was a rancher never getting the chance to attend and sort of university. My father joined the Marine Corp after he graduated high school, after six years of service he joined the Baltimore city police department. My father also never had a

chance to attend college. While on deployment he met my mother. My mother grew up in a dictatorship, money was very hard to come by. She worked hard her entire life just so her family could get by. Even when she came to this country she worked and raised her boys, she never had a chance to attend school. School was always something my mother pushed us in, she never failed to tell us how important it is to attend school. The reason I believe that school is so important to her is that she never really had the chance to go to school herself, it's her dream to see her boys have degrees. My family never had a lot of money but because I was a good student CCBC has provided me with financial grants that help me carry on my collage career. I never had the easiest life; with this I struggle with mental health issues at times. This is something many in my generation also struggle with as well. CCBC never shies away from showing its students all the great resources they must have to support students going through these issues. I have taken advantage of these resources and opened to the great facility that supports us students. I have only felt comfortable at CCBC, it is a place that spreads positivity and warmth for anyone that wants to be there. I also never felt pressure like how most other students feel at 4-year university. Students can thrive in a positive environment, surrounded by positive people in an institution that provides a list of opportunities for students that need it, students like me. If these institutions lose funding, it will lose student students that want to have an education but aren't in the same bracket as other families. These cuts will handcuff a college that was created to help students like me, and there's many of us. Community colleges gives students a chance at a better future, I'm asking that you keep that light at the end of that tunnel brightly burning, not to extinguish it.

Pablo Thompson