

House Economic Matters Committee

March 6, 2024

**HB 1128 - Labor and Employment – Workforce Development – Talent Innovation
Program and Fund**

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, strongly supports **HB 1128**, which establishes the Talent Innovation Program (TIP) in Maryland, along with the Talent Innovation Fund (TIP Fund). This legislation admirably seeks to increase access to high-quality job training by using innovative and sustainable talent financing mechanisms to help meet the skill needs in Maryland – specifically in cybersecurity, health care, biotechnology, manufacturing, and artificial intelligence.

Maryland's community colleges serve as vital hubs of learning, innovation, and opportunity for countless individuals seeking to improve their lives and contribute meaningfully to society. However, MACC also understands the challenges facing our students and industries today, particularly considering rapidly evolving technological advancements and shifting economic landscapes.

The establishment of TIP in Maryland presents an opportunity to address these challenges head-on by creating a dedicated fund to support innovative talent development initiatives – further enhancing community colleges' roles in preparing individuals for success in Maryland's key industries.

Investing in talent development is not just an investment in individuals; it is an investment in the economic future of our state. By equipping our workforce with the skills needed to excel in key industries, we can drive innovation, attract businesses, and stimulate economic growth and prosperity across Maryland. Accordingly, MACC strongly urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** vote on **HB 1128**.

For questions, please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org).