

NEWEST SB517 Public Testimony (1).pdf

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Position: FAV



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of SB517-2024 Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program -
Program Administrator – Alterations**

Since the establishment of the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program, or NGS, thousands of low-income high school students have received the resources and mentorship needed to reach success in post-secondary education. The program has been able to consistently reach students who qualify for a Howard P. Rawlings Guaranteed Access Grant and/or free or reduced lunches by providing grants to non-profit organizations to assist students with education preparation. According to the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education, a recipient of the grant given by NGS, the latter group has achieved many notable successes:

- 48% of seniors were accepted at colleges or universities.
- In total, \$3,752,595 was secured in scholarships and grants for all students. This averaged out to \$16,752.65 per student.
- 10th grade students who were a part of the program were noted to have excellent skills in credit earning, outperforming their peers by 24% while maintaining competitive grades.
- 11th grade students within the program increased their credit earning by 23%, with superior expertise in passing Mathematics by (+5%).
- Moving to 12th grade students, they excelled in passing English and Mathematics (+2% and +1%).
- 65% of all students in the program attended various financial aid/FASFA workshops.

To ensure the continuation and further success of the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program, it is critical to alter the administrator of the program from the Department of Education to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, or MHEC. MHEC is the state's higher education regulatory and coordinating board, that is responsible for establishing statewide policies for Maryland public and private colleges and universities. MHEC oversees student tracking through the Maryland College Aid Processing System, or MDCAPS, which would be a major benefit to the NGS program. MDCAPS would ensure that no student is forgotten and receives the aid and resources they need through NGS. This was a major problem regarding NGS because with the system as is, there was little to no ability to track students who were enrolled in the program. Not being able to keep up with the students is a major disservice of the program because a critical aspect of NGS was the continuation of mentorship even after receiving an offer at a higher education institution.

Therefore, I am proposing SB517, which would amend the administrator of the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program to the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Therefore, I respectfully request a favorable committee report on SB 517.

SB517 Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Brianna Callahan

Position: FAV

KIPP:Forward

February 8th, 2024

To members of the Maryland Senate:

I am writing to advocate and support SB 517 outlining changes to the administration of the Next Generation Scholars program (NGS). KIPP has been recipient of NGS grant funding since its inception; it has provided essential funding to our organization in support of our work with first generation college students in Baltimore City.

I have worked at KIPP Baltimore in Maryland with college enrolled students for 10 years. In that time our organization has supported many students who receive funding from MHEC. This program has been instrumental in giving Maryland students access to higher education, while also providing a sustainable financial pathway to graduation. We at KIPP work closely with students and families to support FAFSA completion to qualify students for Federal and State Financial Aid. We partner with local high school counselors to assist students in completing the necessary document submission to receive this funding.

Since receiving support from the NGS program we have been able to expand our support to increase financial aid literacy and mentorship to our high school students and families. We have created a robust college and career program that starts in middle school and extends to college graduation and beyond.

We believe that altering the administration of the NGS program will allow for a smoother process for organizations and students alike. MHEC already has the operational knowledge and capacity to administer the Guaranteed Access Grant and we as counselors are already in communication with MHEC and familiar with their procedures and processes. This bill will decrease student barriers and increase organization's impact. We are grateful to congress for this vital investment in the future of Marylanders.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Brianna Callahan, MSW
Manager of Alumni Persistence
KIPP Baltimore

Lisa Jones Testimony on Maryland Senate Bill 517 2

Uploaded by: Lisa Jones

Position: FAV

Testimony on Maryland Senate Bill 517
Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program – Program Administrator – Alterations

TO: Chair and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Lisa Jones, First Generation College Bound Alum

DATE: February 14, 2024

Mr./Madam Chair and Members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to offer my testimony in support of altering the administrator of the Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program to be the Maryland Higher Education Commission rather than the State Department of Education. As a First Generation College Bound (FGCB) alum who received college bound services to attend college and earn a degree, I advocate for access to information on financial aid sources available for low-income students to obtain Maryland State, Federal, and Institutional aid to make college affordable.

I am a 1994 graduate of Laurel High School who was the first in my family to attend college. With my parent's love and encouragement to seek higher education along with FGCB's blueprint to harness resources to help realize my college affordability, I am proud to hold a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Georgetown University and a Master of Public Health in Chronic Disease Epidemiology: Social Behavior Sciences from Yale University.

FGCB offered SAT/ACT exam preparation and Free Application for Federal Student Aid workshop services for me to build my confidence and mindset of becoming a prospective college student. FGCB also supported my sister with the same services and helped her with college admissions fees assistance. Such educational services FGCB provided are invaluable and I wish all high school students and their families are aware of and have the same advocate to promote a post-secondary educational path towards affordability.

I thank the Chair and Members of the Committee for hearing my testimony and I respectfully urge a favorable vote on SB517.

SB 517 - State Board - SUPPORT.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: FAV

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 517 - Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program - Program Administrator - Alterations

DATE: February 14, 2024

POSITION: Support

Chair Feldman and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

The Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) seek to express their support for **Senate Bill (SB) 517** - Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program - Program Administrator - Alterations, which would shift the administration of the Next Generation Scholars Program from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC).

MSDE has been managing the grant program since it was established by the Maryland General Assembly in 2016. During that time, the majority of questions and requests for training and technical assistance from non-profit organization grantees have focused on financial aid and the Howard P. Rawlings Guaranteed Access Grant, areas where MSDE staff do not have background knowledge and expertise. By moving the Next Generation Scholars Program to the state agency that administers numerous financial aid programs, streamlined customer service and support could be provided to the nonprofit organizations, parents, and students, with the hope of ultimately bolstering the number of students who successfully apply for the Guaranteed Access Grant.

MSDE is committed to collaborating with MHEC to ensure that a smooth transition of the program to MHEC occurs without interruption of funding to non-profit organization grantees or services to students and families. MSDE would continue to engage with MHEC, local education agencies, and institutions of higher education to assist with administering and evaluating the program and to develop the required annual report to the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor.

However, MSDE does acknowledge that a dedicated position at MHEC would be required to effectively administer the Next Generation Scholars programs and related grants. We respectfully suggest that the funding for said position be deducted from the total \$5 million state funding for the program without negatively affecting the program activities and services.

MSDE and the State Board request that the committee consider this information on **SB 517**. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.

SB 517_DejaCobbs_Fav..pdf

Uploaded by: Deja Cobbs

Position: FWA

Tuesday, 14th 2024
SB517

Good afternoon,

I am Deja Cobbs, the Director of Program Services at First Generation College Bound. I am here in support of SB 517 with amendments for the Next Generation Scholars Program to be administered by The Maryland Higher Education Commission.

First Generation College Bound is a non-profit organization working in Prince George's County for almost 33 years. First Generation College Bound provides comprehensive support to students from low-income families to enroll and graduate from college. Our organizations work with students and their families to navigate the complicated processes of preparing and applying for college. A critical part of this process is applying for financial aid. From the time we enroll students we are able to identify what state need base scholarships and/ or grants they will be eligible for. This is where our outreach efforts go, to increase the knowledge of the financial aid process to low income students. This includes the state grants and scholarships offered through the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

In order for students to complete the process to receive this funding we have to work very closely with our families, students and the Office of Student Financial Assistance of the Maryland Higher Education Commission. It takes time to build the trusting relationship with our students and their families in order for them to complete the financial aid process even while in college. Over the past 33 years, we have assisted 2,813 students who have entered college, 1,103 who have graduated from college, and there are another 1,871 currently in college. In our high school graduating class of 2023 they received 3.4 million dollars in financial aid and 951,400 in state grants.

Due to the recent state legislation passed regarding FAFSA completion, we provided FAFSA information sessions in our 8 high schools located in Prince George's county. 1,111 seniors were able to gain an understanding of how to apply for legislative scholarships, create an MDCAPS account, and complete the Maryland State Financial Aid Application, (MSFAA).

First Generation College Bound wants to work collaboratively with the Maryland Higher Education Commission in providing the outreach to support our low income students in leveraging state financial aid to attend an affordable college and graduate.

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Uploaded by: Joseph Fisher

Position: FWA



First Generation College Bound

"Bridging the Home, Church, School and, Community for Success"

February 13, 2024

Good Afternoon, Chairman Senator Brian J. Feldman Vice Chair Senator Cheryl C. Kagan and members of the Committee

My name is Joseph Fisher. I am the CEO and Founder of First Generation College Bound. I also serve as the chair of the Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity.

I am pleased to provide testimony on behalf of the Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity. I am testifying in support of SB517 The Next Generation Scholars of Maryland Program to be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission with amendments. This is due to MHEC's knowledge and experience of need-based financial aid for low-income students supporting them to attend an affordable college. The Maryland State Department of Education has done well at administering the program. However, it does not have the need base financial knowledge and experience in the area of financial aid to address the needs and concerns of NGS Programs. As a result since year 1 of the program, MSDE has reached out to MHEC for support. I find this understandable as MSDE's focus is on students being college and career-ready. However, for those students who are eligible for need-based financial aid, completing the process with support from the NGS program is most valuable. The MHEC funds awarded will enable the students to attend a Maryland best fit and affordable college.

Recognizing the importance of MHEC administering the grant, NGS programs recognize and appreciate the partnering with the schools they are providing service. As a result, MHEC must have a full-time person not only administering and managing the NGS Program but also collaborating with MSDE for success.

During my years of promoting college affordability to low-income students, with the support of the Maryland Higher Education Commission, there was no doubt in my mind they could attend college and graduate with little to no debt. Due to the financial resources of the Maryland Higher Education Commission there is no excuse for any low-income student in Maryland to attend college if they desire or are made aware they can with NGS Program Support. (please find with this testimony FGCB's Bachelor's Degree data)

As I close, The Maryland Alliance is in favor of SB517 with amendments. I want to thank you for providing this space and time to advocate for the low-income students and parents whom the Alliance represents.

Joseph Fisher
CEO and Founder

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Alumni School Rankings - Bachelor's

As of 2022-11-12 16:01:40 Eastern Standard Time/EST • Generated by Debra Myers

Rank	School ↓	Record Count
1	Bowie State University	128
2	University of Maryland-College Park	111
3	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	81
4	Towson University	66
5	Morgan State University	59
6	Frostburg State University	31
7	University of Maryland-Baltimore County	27
8	Salisbury University	22
9	Coppin State University	22
10	McDaniel College	19
11	University of Maryland-Global Campus	14
12	University of Maryland-Baltimore	8
13	Stevenson University	8
14	Howard University	8
15	Trinity Washington University	7
16	St Mary's College of Maryland	7
17	North Carolina A & T State University	7
18	George Mason University	7
19	Virginia State University	6
20	Hood College	6
21	Hampton University	6
22	George Washington University	6
23	Notre Dame of Maryland University	5
24	Clark Atlanta University	5
25	Bennett College for Women	5
26	Temple University	4
27	Shaw University	4
28	Saint Augustines College	4
29	Norfolk State University	4
30	Loyola University Maryland	4
31	Georgetown University	4
32	Delaware State University	4
33	Capitol Technology University	4
34	Washington Adventist University	3
35	Virginia Union University	3
36	Pennsylvania State University-Main Campus	3
37	Mount St Mary's University	3

38	Morehouse College	3
39	Livingstone College	3
40	Johnson & Wales University-Online	3
41	Georgia State University	3
42	Full Sail University	3
43	Catholic University of America	3
44	American University	3
45	Unknown	3
46	Williams College	2
47	Washington College	2
48	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University	2
49	University of Phoenix-Online Campus	2
50	University of Phoenix-Maryland Campus	2
51	University of Baltimore	2
52	Trinity University	2
53	Strayer University-District of Columbia	2
54	Shenandoah University	2
55	Saint Augustine College	2
56	Rochester Institute of Technology	2
57	Randolph-Macon College	2
58	North Carolina Wesleyan College	2
59	North Carolina Central University	2
60	Marshall University	2
61	Liberty University	2
62	Grinnell College	2
63	Goucher College	2
64	Duquesne University	2
65	Drexel University	2
66	DeVry University-Maryland	2
67	Columbia University in the City of New York	2
68	Chowan University	2
69	Chamberlain College of Nursing-Virginia	2
70	Youngstown State University	1
71	Wilberforce University	1
72	West Virginia University	1
73	Wayland Baptist University	1
74	Warren Wilson College	1
75	Waldorf College	1
76	Valley Forge Christian College	1
77	University of Virginia-Main Campus	1
78	University of Pittsburgh-Pittsburgh Campus	1
79	University of Pittsburgh-Greensburg	1
80	University of Notre Dame	1
81	University of Miami	1

82	University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey	1
83	University of Massachusetts Amherst	1
84	University of Mary Washington	1
85	University of Houston	1
86	University of Akron Main Campus	1
87	The University of the Arts	1
88	The University of Texas at Dallas	1
89	The College of Saint Rose	1
90	Texas A & M University-College Station	1
91	Swarthmore College	1
92	Strayer University-Maryland	1
93	St John's University-New York	1
94	Stanford University	1
95	South Carolina State University	1
96	Sojourner-Douglass College	1
97	Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania	1
98	Sewanee-The University of the South	1
99	Savannah College of Art and Design	1
100	Saint Leo University	1
101	Saint Johns University	1
102	Rutgers University-Camden	1
103	Regent University	1
104	Queens University of Charlotte	1
105	Purdue University - Global	1
106	Polytechnic Institute of New York University	1
107	Pepperdine University	1
108	Pace University-New York	1
109	Oakwood University	1
110	North Carolina State University at Raleigh	1
111	New York University	1
112	Mount Holyoke College	1
113	Middlebury College	1
114	Marymount University	1
115	Manhattan College	1
116	Lycoming College	1
117	Loyola University-Chicago	1
118	Lincoln University of Pennsylvania	1
119	Lincoln University of Missouri	1
120	Lincoln University of California	1
121	Lafayette College	1
122	Kettering College of Medical Arts	1
123	Kentucky State University	1
124	Johnson & Wales University-Providence	1
125	Johns Hopkins University	1

126	James Madison University	1
127	Ithaca College	1
128	Huston-Tillotson University	1
129	Grand Valley State University	1
130	Grand Canyon University	1
131	Georgia Gwinnett College	1
132	Francis Marion University	1
133	Fordham University	1
134	Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	1
135	Fisk University	1
136	Ferrum College	1
137	Fairleigh Dickinson University-Metropolitan Campus	1
138	Emory and Henry College	1
139	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University-Worldwide	1
140	Elon University	1
141	Edward Waters College	1
142	Eastern Mennonite University	1
143	East Carolina University	1
144	DePaul University	1
145	Davis & Elkins College	1
146	Davidson College	1
147	Concordia University-Portland	1
148	Collins College	1
149	College of William and Mary	1
150	Clayton State University	1
151	Cheyney University of Pennsylvania	1
152	Cedar Crest College	1
153	Carson-Newman College	1
154	California State University-Los Angeles	1
155	California State University-Dominguez Hills	1
156	Benedict College	1
157	Barton College	1
158	Averett University	1
159	Anderson University	1
160	Allen University	1
Total		878

SB517_Memuna Bangura_fav..pdf

Uploaded by: Memuna Bangura

Position: FWA

Memuna Bangura
First Generation College Bound
SB 517
2/12/24

Hello my name is Memuna Bangura and a student in First Generation College Bounds College Access Program. First Generation College Bound has been a gateway to opportunities and has provided support throughout my college journey. One important benefit is getting to know more about state grants and scholarships that I wouldn't have known about. Being a part of First Generation College Bound has allowed me to receive advice and encouragement. FGCB ensures I know of the state grants and scholarships that I may qualify for through my MDCAPS account, by giving constant support making sure I am equipped with the tools and support needed for my education.

FGCB workshops allow us students and parents to learn more about financial aid and what they have to offer. Field trips help us to make real-world connections by learning more about our potential careers. FGCB is a family for us first-generation students allowing us to talk to past students and mentors for a sense of encouragement in this college journey. In conclusion, I believe First Generation College Bound has allowed me to take important steps in furthering my education while providing knowledge on financial aid and college to make the best fit for me while also being a constant support. Without FGCB trying to fill and apply for college, grant and scholarships as a first-generation student would have been a challenge.

SB 517_Syeed Mashrafi_fav..pdf

Uploaded by: Syeed Al Mashrafi

Position: FWA

Syed Al Mashrafi
First Generation College Bound
Testimony for SB 517

Hello, my name is Syeed Al Mashrafi and I am a student in First Generation College Bound's College Access Program. Before finding First Generation College Bound (FGCB), the whole college process was a mystery to me. I didn't know about grants or scholarships, let alone how to navigate through it all. FGCB changed everything. They not only showed me the opportunities available but also provided the guidance and support I needed. Without them, I wouldn't have considered college as an option for my future.

What sets FGCB apart is that it goes beyond just information. They organize eye-opening field trips, engaging career workshops like the career puppy sessions where we discover our strengths, and various activities that expand our horizons. Additionally, they offer workshops on crucial topics like FAFSA, MDCAPS, college applications, essay writing, and choosing the right college based on our family situation and income.

Thanks to FGCB, especially my high school coach, Mr. Gasbarro, who's been a constant mentor. He guided me through the college application process, impacting my life positively and helping me get accepted into good colleges. FGCB introduced me to inspiring people and career paths I never knew existed. It's more than a program; it's a life-changer. I'm now equipped to imagine a greater future and aspire to be a future leader, all thanks to FGCB.