

My name is Madison Marino, and I am a visiting fellow in education policy at the Maryland Family Institute. I am here today to request your favorable consideration of Senate Bill 749. This bill allows nonpublic school students enrolled in dual credit programs to apply for the Part-Time and Early College Access Grant programs.

In Maryland, nonpublic school students are currently gated from accessing tuition assistance for dual enrollment programs offered by the state.<sup>1</sup> “48 states and the District of Columbia have state-level dual enrollment policies,” which simultaneously allow students to earn high school and college credit.<sup>2</sup> Of those states, 35 provide some assistance via state-funded appropriations to students enrolled in dual credit or dual enrollment programs.<sup>3</sup> In several states, all students, not just public school students, can access grant programs that help them pay for such opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

Acquiring a postsecondary degree or credential enhances individuals’ earning capacity and economic security<sup>5</sup>, expanding their career prospects and opportunities. This stability remains resilient in the face of economic downturns and fluctuations in the labor market. Enrollment in dual credit programs improves students’ likelihood of starting and finishing said degree. A 2017 study of more than 200,000 high school students showed that 88 percent of dual/concurrent enrollment students “went on to college after high school and completed degrees at higher rates and in less time than their non-participating careers.”<sup>6</sup> In addition, by participating in dual enrollment programs, students can reduce the total cost of their college degree by accumulating credits early.

The Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center (MLDS) reported that for the 2020-2021 academic year, there were 19,872 dually enrolled high school students in Maryland, which represents about 7.28 percent of total high school enrollment in Maryland.<sup>7</sup> Since the academic year 2010-2011, there has been a continuous growth in dual enrollment participation in Maryland.<sup>8</sup> Nationally, 34 percent of US students are taking college courses in high school; this represents a triple increase from the 10 percent participation rate reported in 2010.<sup>9</sup> As demand for these dual enrollment programs continues,

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<sup>1</sup> “Blueprint for Maryland’s Future: College and Career Readiness,” <https://marylandpublicschools.org/Blueprint/Documents/CCRReportSummer2022.pdf> (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>2</sup> “50-State comparison: Dual/Concurrent Enrollment Policies,” Education Commission of the States, May 2022, <https://www.ecs.org/50-state-comparison-dual-concurrent-enrollment-policies/> (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>3</sup> “50-state comparison: Who contributes to paying for student costs of tuition for this program?” June 2022, <https://reports.ecs.org/comparisons/dual-concurrent-enrollment-2022-16> (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> “Earnings and unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2022,” U.S. Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm> (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>6</sup> “NACEP Fast Facts,” National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships, <https://www.nacep.org/resource-center/nacep-fast-facts/> (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>7</sup> “Dual Enrollment in Maryland: Annual Report to the General Assembly and Governor Larry Hogan,” Maryland Longitudinal Data System Center, 2022, [https://mldscenter.maryland.gov/egov/publications/CenterReports/DualEnrollmentReports/MLDSDualEnrollmentReport\\_2022\\_suppressed.pdf](https://mldscenter.maryland.gov/egov/publications/CenterReports/DualEnrollmentReports/MLDSDualEnrollmentReport_2022_suppressed.pdf) (accessed on March 1, 2024)

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> “Dual Enrollment: Participation and Characteristics,” NCES, 2019, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019176.pdf> (accessed on March 1, 2024); “NACEP Fast Facts,” Ibid.

Maryland should provide all students access to resources funded by state taxpayers, such as the Part-Time Grant and Early College Access Grant programs.

Access to grant programs such as the Part-Time Grant and Early College Access Grant programs would provide a much-needed benefit for nonpublic school students and their families, as they are already paying taxes that are funding these programs; furthermore, this would enable Maryland to meet the long-term needs of an educated workforce.