



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

CREATING CHANGE • IMPROVING LIVES

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

SB 603: University of Maryland, College Park Campus – TerpsEXCEED Program - Funding

February 12, 2025

Position: Support

The Councilⁱ strongly supports increased access to high quality, inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to improve employment opportunities and increase overall quality of life. In fact, the Council played a large role in successfully advocating for and providing funding to start the TerpsEXCEED program. Specifically, the Council:

- Provided \$50,000 to the Center for Transition and Career Innovation (CTCI) at University of Maryland, College Park in 2020 to create the Hub for Postsecondary Education Opportunities. CTCI provided technical assistance to colleges and universities statewide.
- Provided \$100,000 in 2021 to the CTCI to coordinate and establish an inclusive higher education program for people with intellectual disabilities, including coursework, a course of study, student preparation, and training for peer mentors. **The first two students enrolled in August 2021.**
- Provided \$50,000 to CTCI to expand and manage the peer mentoring training and certification program. **The peer mentoring program helps students be successful in their academic courses, experience campus life, and expand their social network with support from their peers.**

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Allows the Governor to include \$350,000 in the annual budget for FY 2027 and beyond, and appropriation for the management of the TerpsEXCEED program to provide educational and employment opportunities to students with intellectual disabilities.

WHY is the TerpsEXCEED program important?

- **Improves outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities.** Youth with intellectual disability who participated in inclusive higher education programs, like TerpsEXCEED, are more than twice as likely to exit with paid jobs, make more money, and use less SSI benefits than their peers without postsecondary education.ⁱⁱ

While investments in inclusive higher education are without question needed for people with developmental disabilities, the Council believes that the amount, purpose, and timing of such efforts must take into consideration the needs of all Marylanders with disabilities. Funding for this bill should not be offset by limiting essential funding for other critical needs, most immediately the Developmental Disabilities Administration community services that thousands of Marylanders depend upon.

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ⁱ The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) creates change to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need.

ⁱⁱ *The Importance of Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Intellectual Disability*. Think College <<https://thinkcollege.net>>