

Rev. Dr. Haile K. Lindsay  
9929 Oxbridge Way  
Bowie, MD 20721

March 3, 2025

**VIA EMAIL**

State Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chairman  
Education, Energy & Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building, Room 2  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support of SB524 -Higher Education - Religious Educational Institutions - Certificate of Approval

Dear Chairman Feldman and Senate Committee Members:

First, thank you for your service to the Maryland public on policy and legal issues that impact us the most, especially on matters of education, energy and the environment.

I am writing in support of SB524, a bill to permit religious institutions that received an exemption from the Maryland Higher Education Commission before January 1, 2013, when the state legislature changed the requirements for **religious exempt institutions who are accredited. The change nullified religious exemption for accredited institutions and required the institutions to seek state certification.**

As a member of the Board of Trustees since 2017 at the Maple Springs Baptist Bible College & Seminary, a religious institution that initially received its Maryland state certification as a religious institution on October 20, 1989, Maple Springs has afforded quite a few of my colleagues in Ministry at The Sanctuary at Kingdom Square in Upper Marlboro, Maryland to obtain degrees and certifications over the past several years. They have since used their education to promote the aims and goals of Maple Springs in furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As previously mentioned, I currently serve at The Sanctuary at Kingdom Square as the Minister of New Members Assimilation.

Maple Springs has been the only religious institution that provides a great sectarian education at an affordable price. With the rising costs of post-secondary education and increases in the daily cost of living (food and groceries prices for example), having an affordable post-secondary option is refreshing and necessary.

Celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> year of existence this year, Maple Springs wants to continue its great tradition by operating as originally certified by the state.

Please support SB524 by voting favorably out of this Committee.

Sincerely,

*Reverend Dr. Haile K. Lindsay*

Assistant Secretary, Board of Trustees

Maple Springs Baptist Bible College & Seminary