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HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Capital Budget

Chair, Education and Economic
Development

Oversight Committee on Personnel

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB0184 – Nonpublic Schools- Transcripts-Prohibition on Punitive Measures
Related to Student Debt**

Hearing: January 23, 2025, 1:00, Ways & Means Committee

Chair Vanessa Atterbeary, Vice Jheanelle Wilkins, and members of the committee,

As the sponsor of this bill, I am committed to ensuring that every student in Maryland has equitable access to their educational records regardless of their financial circumstances. Withholding transcripts can have devastating consequences for students and their futures. Transcripts are not merely documents; they are essential tools that enable students to transfer schools, apply for higher education, and pursue meaningful career opportunities.

I would like to share two poignant examples that underscores the urgency of this legislation. Below, an email from the niece of one of our own legislators who was forced to repeat the 10th grade after her private school withheld her transcript, and the second, a mother pleading for assistance after her son's football scholarship was rescinded.

“Dear Delegate Smith,

In 2003, I found myself repeating the 10th grade as my former Catholic private high school withheld my academic transcripts. My student account had an outstanding balance, which, as a 16-year-old, I couldn't afford to settle myself due to financial hardships at home.

Facing this challenge, I transferred schools during the second week of classes after an unsuccessful battle for my transcripts and other official school documents. As a scholar, I encountered an arduous transition to the new school, impacting my GPA and jeopardizing my athletic eligibility.

It is disheartening that a child should endure denial of access to education due to a debt not incurred by the child, but imposed by the school.

The denial of my transcripts forced me to retake 10th-grade courses throughout the 11th and 12th grades. I attended summer school but lost the opportunity to advance my education by taking college courses as a senior.”

Good afternoon,

I am reaching out to anyone I think could provide insight on HB1164. This is a situation that is near to my heart because my youngest son Nathan Harris is currently in a situation where do to his father falling on hard times he fell behind in payments and now he can't pursue higher education. Nathan has since loss football opportunities at Virginia Union and Christopher Newport due to incomplete enrollment. I need to know has this bill passed? Any insight would be helpful and greatly appreciated!*

Sincerely,

Name removed for confidentiality

***HB1164: Nonpublic Schools- Transcripts-Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debt, 2024 Legislative Session**

For these reasons, I urge the committee to vote favorably on HB0184.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Stephanie M. Smith in black ink.

Delegate Stephanie M. Smith.