



March 19, 2026

The Honorable Ben Barnes  
Chair, Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and the Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 845 – Higher Education – Community College Promise Scholarship – Eligibility, sponsored by the Wicomico County Delegation.

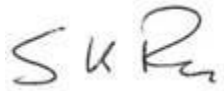
HB 845 makes an important clarification to the eligibility requirements for the Community College Promise Scholarship by ensuring that Maryland residents who graduate from Delmar High School remain eligible for this critical financial aid program. Because Delmar High School serves students in a unique border community shared between Maryland and Delaware, where Maryland students attend a high school located in Delaware, Maryland residents attending the school may face unintended barriers when applying for certain State financial aid programs tied to high school location or residency criteria.

The Community College Promise Scholarship plays an essential role in Maryland's efforts to expand access to affordable higher education and workforce training. The program supports students pursuing associate degrees, workforce credentials, and transfer pathways while helping reduce financial barriers to postsecondary education. Ensuring that all eligible Maryland residents, particularly those living in border communities, have fair access to this opportunity aligns with the State's broader goals of promoting educational attainment, economic mobility, and workforce development.

HB 845 addresses this narrow but meaningful gap by clarifying eligibility so that Maryland residents graduating from Delmar High School are not inadvertently excluded from participating in the program. By doing so, the bill strengthens equity in the administration of the Community College Promise Scholarship and ensures that students are not disadvantaged due to geographic circumstances beyond their control.

For these reasons, the Maryland Higher Education Commission respectfully requests a favorable report on HB 845.

Yours in Service,

Handwritten signature of Sanjay Rai in black ink.

Secretary Sanjay Rai,

Maryland Higher Education Commission