

Testimony in support of SB0534 - FCC - Board of Tr

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0534_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

03/11/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#0534- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees - Meeting and Training Requirements

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0534, **Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees - Meeting and Training Requirements**

This bill is a priority for the Frederick County delegation Senators.

It is submitted in reaction to the decision of the Frederick Community College Board of Trustees to close the on campus childcare center with little community involvement or ability to be heard in public forums or open meetings of the trustees.

The Frederick NewsPost reported on the *FCC Children's Center remains closed even after parent advisory council formed*¹

After months of advocacy from parents and former teachers, the Children's Center at Frederick Community College (FCC) will remain closed for the foreseeable future. Jessica Lertora has a 1-year-old daughter who used to attend the Children's Center daily. She has been leading the parents' fight to reopen. Lertora was initially pleased when FCC decided to form a parent advisory council, but after three meetings, she feels a solution won't be found.

Lertora claims FCC administration and Board of Trustees members were absent from most meetings and that there was a lack of communication from the college as they worked to come up with solutions to reopen the center.

This bill increases the ability of the public to understand how these critical decisions are being made by opening the process to the community.

This bill will establish certain public comment requirements and recording requirements for the Board of Community College Trustees for Frederick County; and require the members of the Board to undergo certain training.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0534.

¹ https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/education/schools/higher_ed/frederick_community_college/fcc-childrens-center-remains-closed-even-after-parent-advisory-council-formed/article_13f27572-ce5e-593b-8908-ffc235f10003.html

SB0534 Written Testimony, Reprint, LoS, Delegation

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA

KAREN LEWIS YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair
Pensions Subcommittee



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District Office
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Frederick, MD 21701
301-662-8520

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
The Honorable Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Maryland Senate
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 11th, 2026

SB534 - Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees - Meeting and Training Requirements

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed colleagues:

Senate Bill 534 is a Frederick County bill that unanimously passed delegation. It will establish an obligation for transparency and communication for the Board of Trustees at Frederick Community College. This bill will require the Board of Trustees to provide an opportunity for public comment at each of their meetings. It will also require the Board to publish and retain video or audio recordings of each meeting. Additionally, this bill requires board members to undergo training every two years on board governance, responsibilities and other roles.

There are sixteen community colleges in the state, thirteen currently follow these practices to better address their communities. Requiring public comment will ensure the Board has the information it needs to be responsive to its community. Publishing a readily accessible video or audio option also allows for members of the public to be informed and aware of the Board's decisions. More communication from the college leads to successful collaboration and support from the community. By requiring the Board to adopt these standards of transparency and accessibility, Frederick Community College will better meet the needs of its students and faculty. I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Lewis Young".

Senator Karen Lewis Young

SENATE BILL 534

F4

6lr1872
CF HB 839

By: **Frederick County Senators**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Frederick Community College – Board of Trustees – Meeting and Training**
3 **Requirements**

4 FOR the purpose of establishing certain public comment requirements and recording
5 requirements for the Board of Community College Trustees for Frederick County;
6 requiring the members of the Board to undergo certain training; and generally
7 relating to the Board of Community College Trustees for Frederick County.

8 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
9 Article – Education
10 Section 16–407
11 Annotated Code of Maryland
12 (2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

Preamble

WHEREAS, Public comment enables and enhances communication and transparency
between decision-making bodies and the community; and

WHEREAS, The Frederick County Delegation acknowledges Frederick Community
College’s efforts to engage with the public; and

WHEREAS, This Act is intended to supplement Frederick Community College’s
efforts to engage with the public; now, therefore,

13 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
14 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

15 **Article – Education**

16 16–407.

17 (a) The Board of Community College Trustees for Frederick County consists of
18 seven members. Of the members:

19 (1) Each shall be a resident of Frederick County; and

20 (2) Each shall be appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent
21 of the Senate, for a term of 5 years.

22 (b) (1) A member of the Board of Community College Trustees may not serve
23 more than three consecutive 5-year terms.

2 REPRINT OF SENATE BILL 534 as amended by SB0534/453824/1 02/12/26 at 1:39 PM

1 (2) A member of the Frederick County Board of Education may not serve
2 on the Board of Community College Trustees.

3 (c) Each member of the Board is entitled to \$500 a year for expenses.

4 (D) EACH MEETING OF THE BOARD SHALL INCLUDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR
5 PUBLIC COMMENT.

6 (E) (1) THE BOARD SHALL MAKE A VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF EACH
7 MEETING OF THE BOARD.

8 (2) THE BOARD SHALL MAKE A RECORDING REQUIRED UNDER
9 PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC ON THE BOARD'S
10 WEBSITE WITHOUT CHARGE AND, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, WITHIN 2
11 BUSINESS DAYS AFTER THE RECORDING IS MADE.

12 (F) (1) THE BOARD SHALL MAINTAIN IN PERPETUITY A VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING REQUIRED
UNDER SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION AND ANY MINUTES OF THE BOARD.

(2) THE BOARD MAY TRANSCRIBE A VIDEO RECORDING REQUIRED UNDER
SUBSECTION (E) OF THIS SECTION IF:

(i) THE VIDEO RECORDING HAS BEEN MAINTAINED FOR AT LEAST 5 YEARS;
AND

(ii) THE TRANSCRIBED VIDEO RECORDING IS MAINTAINED IN PERPETUITY.

(G) AS PART OF ONGOING TRAINING FOR BOARD MEMBERS AND AT LEAST
13 EVERY 2 YEARS, THE BOARD MEMBERS SHALL UNDERGO TRAINING SPECIFIC TO
14 BOARD GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND ROLES.

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
16 1, 2026.

DELEGATE JESSE T. PIPPY
DELEGATION CHAIR

SENATOR WILLIAM G. FOLDEN
DELEGATION VICE CHAIR



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
FREDERICK COUNTY DELEGATION

SENATORS

PAUL D. CORDERMAN
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JUSTIN READY

DELEGATES

CHRISTOPHER ERIC BOUCHAT
BARRIE S. CILIBERTI
KRIS FAIR
KENNETH P. KERR
APRIL FLEMING MILLER
APRIL ROSE
KAREN SIMPSON
CHRIS TOMLINSON
WILLIAM VALENTINE
WILLIAM WIVELL

02/13/2026

Chair Feldman and Vice-Chair Kagan,

SB534, Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees – Meeting and Training Requirements, was voted on by the Frederick County Delegation on February 13th, 2026, and received support from a majority of the Delegation as amended. A voting list has been sent to the committee along with this letter. The Frederick County Delegation asks for a favorable report from the Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesse T. Pippy".

Del. Jesse T. Pippy – Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William G. Folden".

Sen. William Folden – Vice Chair

Frederick County Delegation – Voting List

Date: 2-13-26

Item: SB534 - Frederick Community College – Board of Trustees – Meeting and Training Requirements

Motion: Favorable, Delegation Support

Description: Amendments to insert a preamble on page one after line 12, and insert on page 2 after line 12 storage requirements

Name	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
Chair Pippy	X			
Vice Chair Folden	X			
Delegate Bouchat	X			
Delegate Ciliberti	X			
Senator Corderman	X			
Delegate Fair	X			
Delegate Kerr	X			
Senator Lewis-Young	X			
Delegate Miller	X			
Senator Ready	X			
Delegate Rose				X
Delegate Simpson	X			
Delegate Tomlinson	X			
Delegate Valentine	X			
Delegate Wivell	X			
FINAL VOTE	14	0	0	1

SB0534_Sen.LewisYoung

Uploaded by: Senator Karen Lewis Young

Position: FWA

KAREN LEWIS YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Budget and Taxation Committee
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March 11th, 2026

SB534 - Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees - Meeting and Training Requirements

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Delegate Fair	X			
Delegate Kerr	X			
Senator Lewis-Young	X			
Delegate Miller	X			
Senator Ready	X			
Delegate Rose				X
Delegate Simpson	X			
Delegate Tomlinson	X			
Delegate Valentine	X			
Delegate Wivell	X			
FINAL VOTE	14	0	0	1

SB 534

Uploaded by: Drew Jabin

Position: UNF

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 11, 2026

SB 534 - Frederick Community College - Board of Trustees - Meeting and Training Requirements**Position: Oppose**

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, respectfully opposes **SB 534**. Frederick Community College has already advanced policies that provide training and public comment, therefore this bill is not necessary. Community college boards of trustees are locally appointed governing bodies that are responsible for establishing policies and practices that support the effective governance of their institutions. These boards operate within existing State transparency laws, including the Maryland Open Meetings Act, and already have the authority to establish procedures related to public comment, meeting recordings, and board training.

Community college boards are charged with setting policies that define the mission, goals, and strategic direction of the colleges. While public opinion is welcome and there is a process for establishing appropriate policies, it is done so in a manner that is established by each board in accordance with good governance practices. Accreditation and governance standards reinforce that presidents administer and manage the policies and procedures of the board, and the board governs to maintain a healthy governance culture. Frederick Community College has taken the steps needed to create these policies.

Community colleges across Maryland regularly adopt policies and practices that reflect the needs and expectations of their local communities. Matters such as meeting procedures, opportunities for public participation, board training, and governance practices are appropriately determined at the institutional level by each board of trustees. Maintaining this flexibility allows boards to adopt policies that reflect local priorities while continuing to operate within existing State law.

MACC certainly supports strong governance practices and transparency in the work of community college boards. In fact, many community college boards already provide opportunities for public comment, record meetings, and participate in ongoing governance training as part of their commitment to effective leadership and accountability. However, the requirements outlined in SB 534 address matters that have already been developed by Frederick Community College and can already be implemented through institutional policy and board governance practices without the need for additional statutory mandates. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **UNFAVORABLE** report on **SB 534**.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.

FCC BOT Written Testimony SB534 Final.pdf

Uploaded by: William Reid

Position: UNF



March 5, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 534 – Frederick Community College – Board of Trustees – Meeting and Training Requirements

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Frederick Community College Board of Trustees (the Board) and thank you to the Frederick County Delegation for their communication with the Board during the delegation process earlier this Session. The Board respectfully opposes Senate Bill 534, which would mandate in statute certain requirements for Board meetings, including requiring the opportunity for public comment at all Board meetings and mandating the recording of all meetings and certain posting requirements for those recordings. The Board voted at its January 21, 2026 meeting not to support the legislation and, at its February 18, 2026 meeting, to provide testimony in opposition.

The Board is strongly supportive of transparency and public engagement practices and has already taken several proactive steps to ensure the Frederick County community has the ability to meaningfully engage with the Board and its members on FCC policies and matters. The Board already conducts its work in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Agendas are posted in advance, meetings are open to the public, and minutes are published. In 2021, the Board moved its regular meetings to a larger venue on campus to better accommodate public presence and make it a more welcoming environment for members of the community and permit virtual access to meetings for community members who cannot attend in person. Earlier this year, the Board affirmatively voted to amend its bylaws to allow for public comment at Board meetings. These practices demonstrate a commitment to transparency without the need for statutory prescription and illustrate the Board's ability and willingness to work with our public officials to improve transparency and access through the institutional bylaw process. Members of the public are also free to share feedback with Trustees at any time outside of public meetings (via email), and the Board intentionally seeks community input through structured community input processes to inform the long-term direction of the College.



While the Board supports openness and transparency intended by the proposed legislation, it has concerns that SB534 sets a precedence of codifying Board practices and potentially politicizing Board activities. We are not elected officials, and the work before us is nonpartisan in nature. Community colleges in Maryland are governed by Governor-appointed Boards that are responsible for setting policies tailored to the needs of their counties and students. The proposed legislation would replace this longstanding local discretion with a one-size-fits-all statutory mandate. Boards already have the authority to adopt public participation policies that reflect their community's expectations, and many—including Frederick Community College—have done so. Codifying specific operational requirements in state law would limit the Board's ability to adjust procedures as circumstances evolve. Additionally, creating statutory requirements for select entities already subject to the Open Meetings Act raises questions of consistency and necessity.

The proposed legislation would have operational and fiscal impacts on FCC due to the recording requirements in the Bill. The Board has consulted with similar bodies in Frederick County, including the Frederick County Board of Education and potential vendors, about technology modifications it would need to ensure reasonable and regular compliance with the proposed bill. Based on that research, initial cost estimates indicate a \$15,000 cost to implement enhanced meeting recording capabilities and ensure recording fidelity. During this difficult fiscal environment when budgets and funding are increasingly tight, any additional unfunded mandates on Board operations are difficult to fund.

With respect to trustee training, every member of this Board participates in a comprehensive onboarding process, including mandatory ethics training with the Maryland State Ethics Commission and annual financial disclosure filings. FCC Board Policy requires the Board maintain at least two Trustees who have completed Maryland Open Meetings Act training conducted by the Office of the Attorney General; the Board currently has four Trustees who have completed this training. Trustees also engage in ongoing professional development through nationally recognized organizations, including the Association of Community College Trustees and Govern for Impact. Since January 2023, the Board has participated in more than 40 hours of professional development retreats, all documented in publicly posted Board minutes, and conducts regular self-evaluation in accordance with Board policy.

Again, the Board thanks the Committee and the Delegation for the opportunity to share its concerns about Senate Bill 534 as introduced and respectfully urges an unfavorable report. The Board already operates within a comprehensive statutory and regulatory framework that ensures transparency, accountability, and responsible governance. Frederick Community College was recently reaffirmed for accreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair
Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
March 5, 2026
Page 3

Education, which identified no areas of non-compliance related to Board governance, transparency, or public engagement. The Board remains committed to working with the members of the Delegation, this Committee and the Frederick County community to ensure transparency and enhanced communication with the public and looks forward to pursuing those goals through a collaborative, local process.

Respectfully submitted,

Frederick Community College Board of Trustees