



HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
House Bill 167
Higher Education - State Payments to Private Institutions
February 11, 2020
Unfavorable Report
Patrick Hogan, Vice Chancellor Government Relations

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Jackson and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on House Bill 167. House Bill 167 requires the State of Maryland to provide state funding to private nonprofit institutions of higher education to cover the cost of tuition and fees for eligible students who reside more than 30 miles from a public institution of higher education.

Given the state's limited resources and many funding needs, the USM disagrees with directing public funds to private institutions for this purpose. The bill also does not account for the state's Regional Higher Education Centers, including the Universities at Shady Grove, the USM at Hagerstown and the USM at Southern Maryland in the distant calculation. These regional centers offer affordable convenient access to our public institutions in previously underserved areas of the state. Our regional centers offer high demand programs needed by the regional workforce in state-of-the-art facilities. The programs develop articulation agreements with regional community colleges for streamlined transfer into programs that our employers want.

Moreover, the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) is an online university accessible from anywhere in the state. Each year, thousands of students from Frederick, Carroll, Washington, Garrett, Harford, Cecil, and Southern Maryland study online at UMGC.

With so many ways to access affordable public higher education offered by the USM and our other public college and university partners, this bill is unnecessary.

The USM respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 167.

We understand there is a possible amendment to this bill which would increase the award amount for 2+2 transfer scholarships. The USM is concerned about this change. This amendment would mean fewer transfer scholarship awards for students. There is a cap on the amount of funding available. By increasing the award amount, fewer students are served and could place those not receiving awards due to lack of funding at risk for stopping out.