



APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY

Submitted by

Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Executive Director

bsadusky@mdacc.org

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HB 719 - High Education – Transfer Students – Courses Counting Toward Chosen Degree

POSITION: Support

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges supports HB 719 that requires the development and implementation of a statewide transfer agreement that includes a process to require an institution that does not transfer a course toward a student's degree as intended to offer a substitute course at no additional cost to the student. We greatly appreciate Delegate Hornberger's introducing this legislation that will streamline the transfer process and mediate the cost to students for loss of credit.

It should be the standard practice and expectation that a community college transfer student will spend no more time or money than it takes to earn the additional 60 credits to graduate with the baccalaureate degree once they have transferred to a Maryland public four-year institution with an associate degree. This legislation addresses a growing concern regarding the transfer of a course that is intended to be counted toward degree completion but is rejected because it fails to meet the specific outcomes and therefore transfers as an elective. This causes the student to take additional course work. Courses that do not transfer as intended are costly to students as well as the taxpayers of Maryland.

The average tuition cost for a student taking a three-credit course at a community college is \$456. This does not include the cost of books and materials nor time spent. To retake or add an unanticipated course upon transferring to a public four-year institution, will cost the student approximately \$2,454. More importantly, loss of credit prolongs a student's time in postsecondary education and may result in the student's decision to not continue their pursuit of post-secondary education. This legislation offsets the tuition cost for denied courses by requiring an institution that denies a course to transfer as intended, to provide a substitute course at no additional cost to the student.

According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, nationwide data shows that 22% of community college credits are lost upon transfer to a four-year institution. Currently there is no institutional data on how credits transfer in Maryland. In addition to assisting students in paying to re-take courses, this legislation will require institutions to record and maintain this data.