



**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**March 5, 2020**

**TESTIMONY**

**HB 1175 Community Colleges – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program**

**Submitted by:**

**Dr. Tiffany F. Boykin, Dean of Student Engagement  
Anne Arundel Community College**

**Position:** Support

I want to thank the chair, vice chair and members of the Appropriations Committee for the opportunity to submit testimony for HB 1175, which will provide a grant program for supplemental services and supports for students experiencing food insecurity. I want to thank the sponsors and members of this committee for your continued support of the nearly 500,000 students in 16 community colleges in our state.

Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner has been a growing concern for college students across the nation. Rates of food insecurity are even higher at two-year institutions, as community colleges often enroll disproportionate percentages of marginalized student populations .. The Hunger-Free Campus grant program will help with the increasing number of students who need those services to be successful in achieving their academic goals.

Recognizing food insecurity as a critical barrier to student success and completion, Anne Arundel Community College has established a comprehensive Basic Needs Services program, inclusive of campus food pantries, to help meet the immediate needs of our students. Opening its doors at our Arnold campus location in 2010, the AACC Food Pantry was established to provide non-perishable, grab-and-go snack items that directly benefit AACC students. Today, in partnership with the Maryland Food Bank, and with the support of generous donations of faculty, staff, students, and community members, the College has expanded its pantry offerings to include a wider variety of non-perishables, and fresh fruits and vegetables on a limited basis. We have also been able to expand services to our Arundel Mills and Glen Burnie Town Center campus locations.

While we are fulfilling our missions to serve the students, there are significant costs to community colleges. Since 2013, AACC students have increasingly requested support to access food. In fact, access to food has remained among the leading student support requests, just behind transportation and course related materials. In FY19, nearly 700 students accessed our pantries obtaining approximately 3200 lbs. of food. So far, in FY20, more than 900 students have accessed our pantries obtaining more than 5,700 lbs. of food. Additionally, so far in FY20, the College has awarded \$14,332 in emergency funding to support essential necessities for students. Nearly 20% of that emergency support has been for students' access to nutritionally adequate and safe food.

This grant program will help community colleges to fulfill our missions, through leveraging more sustainable solutions to better address basic food needs on campus. We respectfully request

your support of HB 1175 and appreciate your help in providing funds that will help ensure access for all students to high quality, affordable and accessible learning opportunities at community colleges in the state of Maryland.