



DATE: March 10, 2020

TO: Chair, Maggie McIntosh and Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: College of Southern Maryland (CSM) Board of Trustees

RE: **SUPPORT - HB 966** Higher Education - College of Southern Maryland - Budget

Introduction

Good Afternoon, I am College of Southern Maryland Trustee Jay Webster, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 966, an act concerning the College of Southern Maryland and its reporting and budget requirements. HB 966 is sponsored by our Southern Maryland Delegation and supported by our three boards of county commissioners. We thank Vice Chair Delegate Michael Jackson and Delegate Susie Proctor here today for their support.

As one of nine Trustees serving on the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) governing board, I'm requesting your **support and the passage of HB 966**, which would repeal and reenact with amendments **MD Code, Education Article, 16-610. Reporting and budget requirements.**

HB 966 is important to the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) and its more than 10,000 degree seeking students and 13,000 workforce and personal enrichment students, and I'll explain why.

Background

This year marks the 20th anniversary of CSM becoming one regionalized community college. Prior to 2000, Charles County Community College served Calvert and St. Mary's counties under operational agreements. The law enacted in 2000 provided for one regional college serving three campuses with equal representation on the governing Board of Trustees. There are nine of us, three from each county appointed by the governor, which works quite well. That same legislation created three separate and independent operating budgets for each campus. Because the Trustees are the fiduciaries of the college, I support HB 966 which will allow the college to develop, create and report one, "unified college operating budget" rather than three college budgets by county.

We are asking for this language supporting budget unification for two reasons: 1) to better serve our students, who take classes on multiple campuses and online; and, 2) to allow greater flexibility and efficiencies in college operations. For these reasons, I respectfully ask for your support of HB966.

Contact:

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Good Afternoon Committee Members, and thank you, Trustee Webster.

As explained, the requirement to develop and manage three unique college operating budgets approved respectively by each county may have made sense 20 years ago when our students attended the CSM campus in their home county, but times have changed. Our students have become more mobile, they travel to classes from work, or they choose to take classes on the campus that best fits their very busy schedules.

Almost 40% of our students take classes on our multiple campuses, and another 40% take classes online. The existing budget model doesn't allow for the flexibility to serve today's students

After submitting a similar bill last year, we withdrew it to conduct a summer study with our three sets of county commissioners (Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's), their county administrators, and their budget directors to develop legislation that satisfies all three counties in our region. Together our counties fund about 25 percent of our overall annual operating budget.

We are happy to report that those sessions took place, we were able to bring everyone to the table, and all three county boards of commissioners have signed letters of support that were forwarded to our Southern Maryland Delegation in January.

CSM is grateful for the support of the Southern Maryland Delegation for helping us bring this legislation forward on our behalf this session. Therefore, we are here today to request your **support for HB 966** that would allow us to unify our budget and help make the College of Southern Maryland more accessible to the demands of our students and more efficient in the way we manage and operate our four campuses in three counties.

Thank you for your time.

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