



*The Senate of Maryland*  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

TESTIMONY OF SENATOR SHELLY HETTLEMAN

SB 845 – HIGHER EDUCATION – MARYLAND CORPS PROGRAM FUND –  
ALTERATIONS

In 2016, working with President Ferguson, I introduced a bill to create Maryland Corps, a program to provide young people between the ages of 17 and 23 access to a year of service. In exchange for committing themselves to at least 9 months of work in a nonprofit or government agency, these young people would participate in a year long program to learn about the importance of giving back to their communities, of what it means to be an active and engaged citizen dedicated to being a weaver of the fabric of our democracy.

In addition to giving back to their communities, I envisioned that Maryland Corps would be a vehicle through which young people from all across our state – from the most rural and urban and suburban parts, from high income, as well as low and modest-income families, would come together to learn about one another. Through giving back to their communities, these young citizens would heal the divisiveness that has torn apart our nation – and they would do so one relationship at a time. In addition to building bonds with one another, their service would have a ripple effect across our state.

Young Marylanders would earn a stipend through their work and, after successful completion, earn a scholarship that could be used at a Maryland higher education institution for college or for a vocational program.

This bill would build upon the original concept of Maryland Corps by funding a study that would examine the program as a workforce development tool. It would help to build the foundations that, unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, were never fleshed out. And it would help put in place the necessary framework for a successful program launch.

Maryland can lead the nation in our dedication to service. Thank you for your support of Maryland Corps 4 years ago and I ask for your support of SB845. Thank you.