

**TESTIMONY OF KHADYNE T. AUGUSTINE
THIRD YEAR LAW STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE SCHOOL OF
LAW AND 2015 SCHOLAR, FANNIE ANGELOS PROGRAM FOR ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE
IN SUPPORT OF SB 435**

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
MARYLAND STATE SENATE**

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Good afternoon, my name is Khadyne Augustine, and I am a third year student at the University of Baltimore School of Law and a 2015 Scholar of the Fannie Angelos Program for Academic Excellence. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 435.

I cannot share what the Fannie Angelos Program for Academic Excellence means to me without first sharing my “why.” That is my reason for not only pursuing a law degree, but for fervently fighting each obstacle that I have overcome along the way. Growing up, I wanted the power necessary to effect actual change in underrepresented communities.

Unlike many aspiring lawyers, I did not know anyone in the legal profession personally. Though that did not stop me, I began researching law schools and what started as a simple Google search soon blossomed into one of my greatest blessings. I learned of the Fannie Angelos Program for Academic Excellence. I applied to the program and was selected as one of its 2015 Scholars. When I received that call on Friday, November 14, 2014, I did not realize just how much my life would change.

The Fannie Angelos Program for Academic Excellence operates like a family. This talent search program scours the campuses of Maryland’s four HBCUs in search of students that possess the ability to succeed in law school. Each year eight Scholars are selected. Although each student is unique in his/her own way, they each have one quality in common: Grit. The Program scholars are a relentless group. We are students who, despite any challenges in our personal lives, whether it is family issues, health issues or any challenges that may hinder our progress, possess the perseverance and passion required to achieve our long-term goals. Not to mention we operate like a family; we laugh together, we study together, and we uplift and support each other.

I can say without reservation that if it were not for the support of the Program, my law school experience would likely have been traumatic. Since I started my law school journey, I have faced countless obstacles. I am now a 3L and anxiously anticipating my graduation in 96 days. I attribute my continued success to the support that accompanies selection as a Fannie Angelos scholar. Even on days that I considered throwing in the towel, the unwavering support of the Program, from both staff and my peers, kept me pushing.

I am so grateful to, and wholeheartedly believe in, the Program. I will continue to “pay it forward” by helping, without hesitation, future classes of Scholars.