



To Lead, Advocate and Connect as the Voice of Business

Senate Bill 553 - Universities at Shady Grove Regional Higher Education Center

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

February 12, 2020

SUPPORT

Senate Bill 553 bill establishes the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) Regional Higher Education Center in the University System of Maryland (USM) and specifies its purpose and funding, including offering upper division undergraduate and graduate-level programs.

Codifying the Universities at Shady Gove is incredibly important as USG is directly answering Montgomery County and Maryland's dire need for top talent – particular as it relates to industries that will drive our economy and will ensure that the county and state are competitive regionally and nationally for economic growth.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce represents more than 400 employers of varying sizes and from a wide range of industries. The Chamber is keenly focused on developing an educated and skilled workforce for our county and our state, both today and in the future. It is critical that the state make strategic investments in education and workforce development to ensure that our members will continue to thrive and grow, thereby contributing to the state's economic development.

Last fall, USG's Biomedical Sciences and Engineering Education (BSE) opened and provides for the expansion of academic programs in health care, biosciences, engineering, computational sciences, and other core STEMM (STEM + medical sciences) disciplines offered by USM partner institutions (including University of Maryland, College Park; University of Maryland, Baltimore; and UMBC, among others) in support of the regional and state workforce.

For the aforementioned reasons, **the Chamber supports Senate Bill 553 and respectfully urges a favorable report.**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) accelerates the success of our nearly 500 members by advocating for increased business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure, and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national, and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and is proud to be a Montgomery County Green Certified Business.

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