

MGA_SenatorKing_FAV_SB0553

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Position: FAV

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

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

February 12, 2020

Mister Chairman and Members of the Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

Established in 2000, The Universities at Shady Grove (USG) is a University System of Maryland (USM) Regional Higher Education Center (RHEC) offering upper level undergraduate and graduate degree programs from nine public Maryland universities in one campus in Montgomery County. Participating USM institutions include: Bowie State University (BSU); Salisbury University (SU); Towson University (TU); University of Baltimore (UB); University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB); University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC); University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP); University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), and University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC-formerly UMUC).

Students apply directly to the university offering their chosen major, and on the application, they simply select USG as their preferred campus location. The professors, curriculum, and degree are provided by the home university, but students at the USG campus benefit from small class sizes, increased scholarship opportunities, and an array of customized on-site services and student life - leading to a more personalized, cost-effective, and time-saving path to degree completion.

USG's innovative and pioneering partnership approach to higher education is designed to connect local college students to outstanding career opportunities, while providing regional employers with a highly educated, skilled workforce. Only the upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses are offered on the USG campus, fostering a supportive environment of students focused on completing their degrees and advancing their careers.

Under current law, USG is included as "...any other center, ... established and operated by USM in accordance with its mission..." Senate Bill 553 will codify the existence and purpose of the Universities at Shady Grove as well as codifying that funding for USG shall be provided in the State budget.

The Universities at Shady Grove have become a proven model of success for students and an economic engine for the state and it is time to codify them with other centers and institutes as components of the University System of Maryland and so I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 553.

MCCC_FAV_SB0553

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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.

Tricia Swanson, Vice President, Government Relations
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