

Chairwoman McIntosh, Vice-Chairman Chang and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

I am Mirta Valdés-Bradner and I am an AP Spanish Language and Culture teacher at North Caroline High School in Caroline County where I have taught for the last 18 years. Caroline County is a rural, agricultural community located in the heart of Maryland's Eastern Shore.

I am delighted to express my support for Delegate Solomon's prior learning credit policy bill, HB 1208, which seeks to remove roadblocks by establishing a task force to create uniform credit policies for prior learning assessments like AP and CLEP. An AP Exam is scored on a scale of 1 to 5 with research determining that scores of 3 and higher are appropriate for earning college credit; yet, some of our public colleges and universities do not give credit for scores of 3, which can have a detrimental impact on students. For example, in my own course, the majority of students who earned a score of 3 on the AP Exam last year, were minority and low-income. Whether intended or not, the lack of a uniform credit policy harms our most vulnerable students making the transition to postsecondary even more challenging.

Protecting credit awarded in transfer is also an issue for Maryland students. Students who start at a community college, may lose all their AP credit when transferring to a four-year school if that school requires a higher AP score. You can imagine how upsetting that would be for a student who thinks they're going to begin their major course studies, but who learns they have to go back and take an introductory course.

In 2020, Maryland ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in AP performance with over 31% of its public-school graduating class earning a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam. We are proud of this position. Most states would like to be where we are. To be clear, this level of success is not achieved by accident, but through the hard work and commitment of students, teachers, administrators, and counselors. Please reward us all for these efforts by creating a stronger prior learning credit policy system.

I thank the committee for its time and attention and would be happy to answer any questions.

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