



**House Appropriations  
House Bill 1208  
Task Force to Study Academic Credit for Prior Learning in Higher Education  
March 16, 2021  
Favorable with Amendments  
Joann Boughman  
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Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 1208. The proposed task force to study the awarding of academic credit for prior learning in higher education addresses an important issue for all institutions of higher education. We believe this to be a reasonable approach to address these issues.

The University System of Maryland (USM) has some concern, however, in the makeup of the Task Force. As it stands, the community colleges would have 17 representatives and the 12 institutions and three regional centers of the USM, representing over 170,000 students, would have only one representative. We would like to propose that, instead of "one representative of the University System of Maryland (1)(c)(4)(v)", the bill read:

One representative of the University System of Maryland (central office), and three (3) additional appointees from University System of Maryland institutions - one from a research institution, one from a comprehensive institution, and one from an HBCU.

We also note that UMGC has a great deal of expertise in the area of assessment of prior learning, so either a representative from UMGC or the inclusion of experts from UMGC in the agendas of the Task Force would be helpful.

The University System of Maryland recognizes the importance of the assessment of prior learning and that in certain situations, academic credit could be earned for a variety of activities. The authority for the awarding of specific credits must remain with the institutions, but there should be conversations about the issue and attempts made to standardize such credit awards.

We have been in contact with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and they are in agreement that the addition of more members representing the institutions of the USM is reasonable.

Therefore, USM is favorable with amendments for House Bill 1208. Thank you for considering our testimony.



## **About the University System of Maryland**

The University System of Maryland (USM)—one system made up of 12 institutions, three regional centers, and a central office—awards 8 out of every 10 bachelor’s degrees in the State of Maryland. The USM is governed by a Board of Regents, comprised of 21 members from diverse professional and personal backgrounds. The chancellor, Dr. Jay Perman, oversees and manages the operations of USM. However, each constituent institution is run by its own president who has authority over that university. Each of USM’s 12 institutions has a distinct and unique approach to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from western Maryland to the Eastern Shore, with the flagship campus in the Washington suburbs. The USM includes Historically Black Colleges and Universities, comprehensive institutions, research universities, and the country’s largest public online institution.