**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**
**House Bill 46**
**Education – Student Horizon Database and Scorecard**
**February 10, 2021**
**Informational**

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding House Bill 46. The bill requires the State Department of Education to collect information each year and publish a Student Horizon Scorecard

The Federal government already has a comprehensive comparison tool that incorporates much of what is outlined for the Maryland scorecard. Here is the link to College Navigator: https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ The Federal tool will always be better because a prospective student can compare institutions across the country. The Maryland tool would be limited to only the schools in Maryland.

Graduation rates at the program level is problematic because students often change their majors. For example, pre-nursing students who may drop out of a program but change majors and successfully complete in sociology. Additionally, USM institutions would be unable to report on low enrollment majors. Even if FERPA were not an issue, the rates would be very erratic because of the low headcounts.

Reporting starting salary data is problematic too. Not all students go right into the workforce. Some go to graduate school, some choose to work only part-time, some don't find employment right out of school. These are not included in the calculation, but the fewer students in the average again skews the numbers. Salisbury University, for example, collects this information through the first destination survey, but the calculation would be limited to those who respond and limited again to those who are working full-time maybe not necessarily in their degree major.

The higher level of detail in College Navigator really gives students a robust number of data points on which to compare institutions across the country. The data are sound because all of it comes from IPEDs submissions which are very clear in their definitions and reporting methodology. For this to be done properly, clear definitions and concise methodology will be required to avoid each institution interpreting the data request differently.