



HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS
House Bill 1295
University System of Maryland - Student Fees - Review and Retention
March 16, 2021
Favorable with Amendment

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang and members Committee, thank you for this opportunity to testify on House Bill 1295. As a system of higher education, USM creates a dynamic environment that is helping to power Maryland, the nation, and the world forward. USM is a recognized leader in many areas. These include academic and research excellence, innovation, economic and workforce development, and the effective and efficient use of resources.

The mission of the University System of Maryland is to improve the quality of life for the people of Maryland by providing a comprehensive range of high quality, accessible, and affordable educational opportunities; engaging in research and scholarship that expand the boundaries of current knowledge; and providing knowledge-based programs and services that are responsive to the needs of the citizens of the state and the nation.

USM fulfills its mission through the effective and efficient management of its resources and the focused missions and activities of each of its component institutions.

The University System of Maryland and its campuses have a complex budget to support personnel (faculty and staff), facilities, and the many activities that enrich the student experience in college. Many sources of funding support the work of the campus. The State provides approximately 24% of our \$5.8 billion dollar budget for which we are very grateful. In addition to the extramural research support, other major sources of funding for our institutions include tuition and fees that support the academic programming and the support personnel and units across the campus, such as the library, IT infrastructure, and Student Affairs which includes health and wellness, athletics (both intra and extramural) and student activities.

A value central to the functioning of the System and its institutions includes the process of shared governance, and to that end we include our constituencies in the processes that provide input to the Board of Regents. In the assignment of student fees, the Board of Regents has a policy that includes the following language:

Student Consultation: In the interest of giving the Board as much information as possible to make the best and most transparent decision regarding student fee schedules, each campus will ensure that an advisory committee—or other appropriate committee(s) involved in the processes of setting student fees—is established and is comprised of appropriate numbers of students and stakeholders representing each area supported by a student fee.

- The advisory or similar committee(s) will be consulted prior to the establishment or change of student fees during the determination process.
- The process by which these advisory committees are involved in the determination of student fees will be submitted to the Board of Regents along with the proposed fee schedule.

We understand the intent of House Bill 1295 and agree that fee setting should be an inclusive process as is required by our policies. We believe the current reporting as well as our usual budgeting and auditing processes are adequate. **We therefore respectfully request that the detailed quarterly reporting of budget details to the student committee(s) required in H III be eliminated.**

In addition, the USM can be supportive of House Bill 1295 with the following proposed language change in section H (2). Having worked with the Senate sponsor of Senate Bill 895, we agreed with the amendments provided by the sponsor with the addition:

(2) The revenues derived from mandatory fees to fund support for student activities, improvements of facilities routinely utilized by students, or student sustainability efforts, shall be expended in a manner consistent with the intended purpose for which the fee exist. A fee use exception may be implemented if reviewed with the Committee on the Review of Student Fees.

The USM requests a favorable report of House Bill 1295 with all proposed amendments.



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.