

Testimony in Support of House Bill 1215- Maryland Technology Internship Program

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Madam Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kayla Massey and I am a Junior at the University of Maryland Baltimore County studying Dance (B.A.) & Information Systems (B.S.) with a Minor in Entrepreneurship. When I was 16 years old, my mother and I had a conversation where she encouraged me to combine my passion for dance with a strong desire to serve others. That particular conversation birthed the idea of starting my own non-profit organization in the community, and also always looking for opportunities to combine both passion and service. I currently have the opportunity to intern at the International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD). While interning at IABD, I have been able to take on projects with the marketing department that allowed me to really experiment and experience genuine trial and error while being in a professional space. These projects included social media marketing, email marketing, website management, etc. The experiences and lessons I have already taken from these errors has allowed me to learn a lot about the world, other people, and especially myself. Also, because I was in the intern position, I had a lot more flexibility to figure things out and make mistakes that would help me significantly, that I may not have had the privilege of doing if I was an employee operating in the

“real world”. These lessons are also things I will be able to take along with me as I officially launch my own organization this year and beyond in my professional career.

The funding for this internship has also been very helpful for me. Because of the current time, being able to receive pay for the work I do helps cover some living expenses that occur throughout the month. Also, as this is my Junior year, I am in the process of preparing for my next steps after college. With all of the uncertainty in the world, being funded for this opportunity allows me to save money for the near future. So, I am here to express my support for House Bill 1215 which will provide more internship opportunities to students in areas across the state of Maryland.

By creating and building the Maryland Internship Opportunities Program, more students who struggle with getting paid internship opportunities in non technical majors will have the ability to have an internship experience. Internships stimulate growth outside of the classroom, allow students to build their professional network and round out a students' early career to make them a more competitive candidate as they enter the workforce.

This program would positively impact workforce development in Maryland and provide financial support to companies working towards arts, education and social justice. I urge you to vote favorably for HB1215. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kayla Mary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kayla" and the last name "Mary" clearly distinguishable.