

March 16, 2021

Chairwoman McIntosh
Appropriations Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
121 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: College Board support for HB 1208

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

On behalf of the College Board, I am pleased to express our support for Delegate Solomon's HB 1208 seeking to establish a task force to study and develop uniform standards for awarding academic credit for prior learning assessments like Advanced Placement (AP) and CLEP.

For more than 60 years, the College Board's AP Program has collaborated with high schools, colleges, and universities to prepare students for success in higher education. AP provides motivated and academically prepared students with a challenging curriculum developed, approved, and evaluated by college and university faculty.

Research shows that AP students are better prepared for college. They are more likely to enroll in a four-year college and earn higher GPAs while there. Following challenging coursework, students have the opportunity to save money and time by earning college credit and placing out of introductory courses with an AP Exam score of 3 or higher while still in high school.

Once AP students have placed out of introductory courses, they perform as well or better than their peers in higher level courses. AP students are also more likely to finish their degrees promptly and save the costs of a fifth year of college. For example, a fifth year in college working on their degree adds, on average, \$21,370 in costs (tuition, fees, room and board) at four-year public in-state colleges, \$37,430 at four-year public out-of-state colleges, and \$48,510 at four-year private colleges or universities.

Enacting a comprehensive statewide credit policy in Maryland will help students receive the credit they earned through rigorous coursework and success on AP Exams.

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 without a common acceptance of AP scores of 3.

Maryland should remove roadblocks that have been long standing challenges to credit applicability of corresponding college credit for high achieving AP students. Unfortunately, many Maryland higher education institutions are not awarding AP credits to students due to inconsistent credit granting policies. As a result, thousands of Maryland AP students who earned successful scores are losing out on earned college credit, and then must pay to retake a similar campus-based course.

Similarly, the College Board's College-Level Examination Program®(CLEP®) is a rigorous credit-by-exam program that allows students from a wide range of ages and backgrounds to demonstrate mastery of introductory college-level material and earn college credit. The exams are designed, developed, and approved by college and university faculty, and research

consistently shows that students who score a 50 or higher on CLEP exams experience greater academic success in college and improved college completion rates.

Today, CLEP is accepted at more than 2,900 colleges and universities, and students can earn college credit by demonstrating competency in any of CLEP's 34 subjects, spanning English, math, science, history, business, and world languages. As of May 2020, 19 states have state-or system-wide CLEP policies. A clear and consistent CLEP credit and placement policy ensures that qualified students consistently receive credit or placement.

CLEP serves a diverse group of traditional and nontraditional students—high school students getting a head start on college, college students accelerating their progress toward degree completion, and service members and other adults returning to college to expand their career prospects.

On average, students who earn CLEP credit complete their degrees in less time than their non-CLEP counterparts, which means that CLEP helps students complete their studies and enter the workforce sooner.

The College Board appreciates and welcomes Delegate Solomon's leadership in introducing HB 1208, which seeks to ensure granting of consistent college credit and encourages support and passage of the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S.H. Bassett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Stacy Bassett
Senior Director, State Government Relations
College Board