



House Bill 1067

Community College Tuition and Residency Waivers – Funding

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Hearing Date: March 9, 2021

From: Alex Butler and Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1067. The bill would require the Governor to include \$10 million in the State budget to fund tuition and residency waivers for community colleges, which then would be proportionally distributed by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Currently, state law requires community colleges to waive the tuition or residency requirements for qualified individuals in the following groups: foster care recipients; unaccompanied homeless youth; individuals with disabilities; and senior citizens. In addition, specified individuals from the following groups are eligible for in-county or in-state tuition: certain members of the U.S. Armed Forces or National Guard and their families; public school teachers taking a required course; children of State or local public safety employees killed in the line of duty; and a student enrolled in specified health workforce shortage areas.

HB 1067 fulfills the policy established by these meritorious policies properly. It provides State funds to support the tuition payments waived in the pursuit of promoting these educational goals, rather than obliging the colleges or other tuition-paying students to absorb those costs.

Maryland's counties recognize that community colleges are a valuable strategic asset to our state and local communities. As a partner in helping get Marylanders into the workforce, counties support HB 1067 in its mission to provide more students the opportunity to attend community college and enter the workforce prepared to address the challenges of these difficult times.

Strong, well-funded community colleges contribute directly to Maryland's workforce and will help keep Maryland as a leader in education. HB 1067 would increase state aid for community colleges by \$10 million annually and allow for more students to continue their educational goals. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1067.