

Historically Black Colleges and Universities - Funding

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Adrienne Jones

Committee: Appropriations

Organization Submitting: Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

Person Submitting: Dr. Nicole Hollywood, LSPC

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

The Lower Shore Progressive Caucus recognizes the significance that HBCU's play in Maryland, and in our country. Founded during a time of hostility and forced segregation, for over 100 years Historically Black Colleges and Universities have been unique American institutions predicated on providing educational opportunities to students many of whom originate from historically underserved communities. While they account for only 3% of public and not-for-profit private institutions receiving federal student aid, they enroll 10% of African American college students nationwide, produce 17% of the bachelor's degrees earned by African Americans, 24% of the degrees earned by African Americans in science, technology, engineering and math, and are the top producers of African American Ph.Ds. Serving as critical access points to post-secondary education for many Black and first-generation students, the preponderance of research has found HBCUs to provide deeply supportive educational environments that are unparalleled elsewhere with Black graduates of HBCUs more likely than Black graduates of majority serving institutions to be thriving.

More than a decade ago, four Maryland HBCU's, including one on Maryland's Eastern Shore, joined together in a lawsuit to remedy longstanding racial disparities and funding inequities. U.S. District Judge Catherine Blake ruled that Maryland had maintained a dual and segregated education system and had grossly underfunded HBCUs for decades.

HB1 will send a strong message to the people of Maryland that the State values its Historically Black College's and Universities and is committed to ensuring their future by establishing a new unit to assist in evaluating proposals for new programs and substantial modifications of existing programs, creating an HBCU reserve fund, and dedicating \$577,000,000 in the State budget in fiscal years 2023 through 2032 towards the settlement.

The Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.