



SEIU MARYLAND & DC STATE COUNCIL

1410 Bush Street, Suite F, Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Testimony in **SUPPORT of Senate Bill 538**
Community College Tuition and Residency Waivers - Funding

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 3, 2021

1:30 PM

Presented to: Guy Guzzone, Chairman
By: Terry Cavanagh, Executive Director

SEIU Maryland & DC State Council urges a **Favorable Report to SB 538.**

SEIU is the largest union in North America. We are uniting workers in health care, public services, including public education, and property services to improve lives and the services we provide. We represent over 50,000 workers in the Maryland/DC/Virginia region.

Our members are both consumers and providers of community college education. If colleges are not properly funded, tuition may go up and salaries are squeezed. It puts a burden on the colleges and threatens their ability to fulfill their mission.

The State has not properly funded the Cade formula, and has placed unfunded mandates on our community colleges. SB 538 recognizes the latter and provides much needed revenue to those colleges most impacted. We applaud this effort.

For many of our members and their families, community colleges have been the only available step up to the middle-class and greater stability for themselves and their communities. Unfortunately, that step is getting steeper. What was once affordable for almost anyone, is less affordable for many working-class Marylanders. The double-whammy is that this is occurring at the very time that wages for many lower-skilled workers has been stagnant. The result is a widening wealth and skills gap.

We must adequately fund our community colleges to meet the needs of the future.

We urge a Favorable Report on SB 538. Thank you.

