

Good Afternoon Mr Chair, Mr. Vice-Chairman and thank you
Senator Salling for sponsoring this bill.

I am Arsalan Siddiqui, Co-Director of Government Affairs at the **University System of Maryland** Student Council, helping to advocate for over 170,000 students across the state of Maryland, and we stand in support of SB904. Almost all courses at higher-ed institutions require textbooks of some-kind for students, and SB904 is really a common-sense bill that allows college students tax-exemption on their textbooks for two weeks every year. It is no surprise that college expenses, whether they be tuition, or fees, have risen astro-nomialicly over the years, and textbooks in particular are outpacing that by a large factor. It is said that a community college student will spend more hours in a minimum-wage job to pay for their textbook than they would sitting in a course they're buying the book for. On average, college students pay for over \$900/year on textbooks, and although that amounts to roughly just \$55/60 dollars in taxes, every dollar saved for college students can go a long way. Which is why so many neighboring states, like New York, New Jersey, West Virginia, Virginia and Pennsylvania have understood such a need, and have some type of tax empetion on textbooks for college students. That money saved is only helping students pay off their tuition, college debt, or their student fees, or their bills etc. which is why we ask for a favorable report of SB904.

Thank You!