

Members of the Senate's Budget and Taxation Committee,

I am writing to you to give my strongest support and written testimony to advance Bill SB904. As a first-generation college student and campus leader, I believe this bill will impact the lives of countless students who do not have the financial means to purchase costly textbooks and mandatory supplies.

Before I was a student at the University of Maryland, College Park, I attended Frederick Community College, where most of the necessary class materials were free or of low cost. However, few classes would require expensive textbooks, and this placed pressure on students to spend the few savings they have accumulated on textbooks worth \$100-\$150 per course. At the University of Maryland, the cost of materials is much higher and creates a barrier for myself and other students to excel in our classes. As a full-time undergraduate student, it is difficult to find a paying job that will work with your class schedule. And because of the pandemic, there are now even fewer opportunities for paid internships.

By allowing a tax-free weekend for textbooks, you are opening the doors for many students who are unable to purchase their class materials. These students can succeed in their classes and save their money to pay off their student loans with your help.

Thank you  
Melanie Rojas