



**SB943 - University of Maryland Strategic Partnership Act of 2016 -
Appropriations and Degree and Credential Programs - Alterations
Favorable**

March 9, 2021

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

The University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: MPowering the State (MPower) combines the extraordinary resources of the state's largest public research engines — the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) — to strengthen and serve the State of Maryland and its citizens. MPower has fostered hundreds of collaborations that are growing Maryland's innovation economy, advancing interdisciplinary research, increasing educational benefits, and addressing the state's most critical issues.

The MPowering the State (MPower) partnership was originally launched in 2012 and further advanced by the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership Act passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2016. The partnership was further formalized in 2018 with the appointment of one vice president for research to lead the joint research enterprise.

For the first time, the University of Maryland, College Park and the University of Maryland, Baltimore were linked together in 2020 as one research enterprise in the ranking, with combined research expenditures of \$1.1 billion. This expanded research effort earned us a ranking of No. 14 overall and No. 8 among public institutions. With this new ranking, the state of Maryland joins an elite group of six states with more than one research university conducting research at or above \$1 billion per year. SB943 will allow us to build upon this unprecedented success and help us to drive the future of Maryland.

The Strategic Partnership Act created and funded the Center for Maryland Advanced Ventures (CMAV), launched in FY 2018, with \$4 million in annual funding to strengthen the commercialization of high-potential, university-based discoveries. CMAV has fulfilled its legislative mission of facilitating technology transfer, identifying research projects that can be commercialized, and developing programs to support that commercialization. The USM Maryland Momentum Fund, which is staffed by CMAV, has invested nearly \$7 million in 25 companies affiliated with 7 University System of Maryland institutions. The USM investment has been matched by \$36 million from 120 private investors.

With additional funding provided in SB943, CMAV will be able to significantly increase entrepreneurship and job creation in Maryland, creating and/or retaining approximately 100 jobs per year in Baltimore City. We will particularly focus on increasing diversity of management-level positions in University created and sponsored businesses and creating lab incubator space for University start-ups. Funds will also be invested in high priority translational research, including Artificial Intelligence, Health Informatics, and Personalized Medicine. These focus areas capitalize on strengths at UMB and UMCP, expanding research and commercialization collaborations between both universities.

Another initiative of the Strategic Partnership is the Baltimore Fund, which has created and/or retained 400 jobs in Baltimore City through conditional grants to 18 companies affiliated with Maryland public higher education institutions. One major example is Paragon Bioservices, which after receiving a grant from the Baltimore Fund, was acquired by Catalent for \$1.2 billion and has expanded to over 1,000 jobs in Maryland, with major facilities in Baltimore City, Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County, and the UMBC Research & Technology Park in Baltimore County.

Similar to the Baltimore Fund, SB943 provides funds to allow UMCP to help create the economy of the future in Prince George's County and the State of Maryland by continuing to build an ecosystem of innovation and entrepreneurship. Of the recently announced *Future 20 Companies* the Maryland Department of Commerce listed as having the best change for growth and job creation, seven are in Prince George's County and six are located in the UMCP Discovery District. However, there are also many potential new companies that never get off the ground because they lack early funding. This much needed new investment will support the operations of newly created companies spinning out of UMCP labs and classrooms at the early and vulnerable stage so that more of these companies can grow into meaningful job creation engines for the economy of the State of Maryland.

Established by law in 2016, University of Maryland Center for Economic and Entrepreneurship Development (UMCEED) increases workforce readiness by creating educational degree programs in high-impact fields such as neuroscience, virtual and augmented reality, biomedical devices, data analytics, and cybersecurity. Examples include the Visiting Fellows in Neuroscience Program launched to offer cross-campus training in neuroscience. Graduate students at UMB and UMCP are working with research groups at the opposite campus to acquire new techniques and broaden their training. Through UMCEED we were able to launch a new, undergraduate Neuroscience major at UMCP in fall 2020, to train students interested in health care, allied health careers, biomedical industries, and clinical psychology.

The bill will strengthen the success of UMCEED by adding Quantum, Advanced Data Computing and Information Technologies to the mandate of fields of study that UMCEED can engage in. With this change we will be able to build on our successes in these vitally important areas. The state of Maryland is poised to be a leader in many emerging high technology fields and SB943 broadens our efforts to be a world leader in creating the economy of the future.

UMB and UMCP urge a favorable report on SB943.