



SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

TESTIMONY

Submitted by

**Dr. Bernard Sadusky, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Community Colleges**

SB0554 – Higher Education – Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

Position: Support with Amendments

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges representing Maryland's 16 community colleges appreciates the unique and worthy services of the Peace Corps and understands the sponsor's initiative to offer residency tuition rates to the returning peace corps volunteers who are domiciled in Maryland and choose to attend one of our postsecondary institutions.

While we realize that the number of individuals affected by this legislation may be relatively small, however, each year more and more tuition waivers are mandated without a corresponding funding increase. To help mitigate the loss of revenue incurred by the State's community colleges we ask that the Committee incorporate the following amendment:

New Section (C) ANY STUDENT ATTENDING A COMMUNITY COLLEGE IN THIS STATE WHO PAYS A TUITION FEE AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH B SHALL BE INCLUDED AS AN IN-STATE RESIDENT FOR COMPUTATION OF STATE AID TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 16-305 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

Rationale

Community college funding is unique among postsecondary education in that community colleges receive revenue from 3 different sources. These sources of revenue are the state of Maryland, the local county (or counties for regional community colleges) served by the community colleges and student tuition. Student tuition rates are established based upon whether a student is being supported by county funding, state funding, or neither. If a student is a resident of the county that the community college serves, the student will pay the lowest tuition rate supplemented by both county support and State support. If a student is from a

different service area but still resides in Maryland, out-of-county tuition is higher because the county doesn't support a student that does not pay local taxes. Out-of-state tuition is highest because the student is not supported by either local or state funding.

When legislation is introduced which mandates that a student pay only the in-county tuition cost, our institutions do not receive support for the full cost of educating that student. Consequently, our institutions have no choice but to raise tuition for all students to make up for this tuition short fall. Raising the cost of tuition for all students makes it more difficult for low-income and high-risk students to attend a community college full time and many times the added cost impacts their ability to pursue their postsecondary education.

With the above proposed amendment, Maryland's community colleges support this legislation.