



EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
House Bill 320
Maryland Longitudinal Data System - Transfer of Student Data - Modifications
March 18, 2021
Favorable Report

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on House Bill 320. I am Nancy Shapiro, Associate Vice Chancellor for USM and the Chancellor's Representative to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Governing Board. The bill, generally, transfers the responsibility for providing specified professional and occupational license and industry and vocational certificate data to the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) Center from the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). The USM urges a favorable report.

The MLDS is an especially valuable and important resource for Maryland's education and workforce policy makers. We frequently talk about the P-20 continuum—from Pre-school through graduate school and workforce—as the life-force of our State's economic and social progress. How many times have we heard "Our children are our future"? How many times have we justified decisions by asking, "How can we broaden participation" in our colleges, universities and high wage jobs? MLDS helps us answer those big policy questions by researching and analyzing longitudinal, cross-segmental (P-K education/post-secondary education/workforce) data to unpack where we are being successful and where we need to focus on solving problems.

This bill would allow the MLDS Center to collect the following information:

- Professional and occupational licenses from Department of Labor and Department of Health.
- Vocational certificates from Maryland Community Colleges; and
- Industry certifications from a national certifier that receives state funds.

House Bill 320 fixes the legal and procedural issues with the law to allow the data to be collected directly by the MLDS Center. This data is important because it provides greater insights into career pathways and can help us better understand the outcomes of different programs that lead to professional and occupational licenses and careers. Specifically, the bill allows for additional representatives to be added to the MLDS Governing board, to accommodate the Health Occupation Boards, which are independent of the Secretary of the Department of Health. No new data is being added, rather, this bill simply allows the MLSD Center to directly collect that data as opposed to having that data be collected by MHEC and then sent to the MLDS Center.

The direct collection of this data is a more secure and efficient transfer process. The clarifying language also resolves an issue related to Personally identifiable information (PII). MLDS is already authorized to collect PII, but the Department of Health operates under different regulations, and this bill would resolve that inconsistency for data transferred to MLDS. MLDS is held to the highest security standards and student privacy standards that protect any information transferred.

Again, the USM supports a favorable on House Bill 320.

