

UMDSGA_FAV_SB767.pdf

Uploaded by: Alpert, Dan

Position: FAV

My name is Dan Alpert and I am the Student Body President at the University of Maryland, College Park. I'd like to start by thanking Chair Pinksy and all the members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee for the opportunity to share our thoughts on this bill. Thank you also to Senator Washington for introducing this legislation, which addresses the serious issue of food insecurity on college campuses.

A 2019 study conducted by the University of Maryland, College Park reported that 20% of UMD students qualified as food insecure and a further 21% were marginally food secure¹. These students reported difficulty focusing in class and were 15 times more likely to be "down or depressed" than food secure students. Food insecure students also had an average GPA 0.2 points below that of food secure students. The clear message this survey showcases is the correlation between food insecurity and the day-to-day actions of a university student.

Our University has taken steps to remedy these problems, such as establishing a campus food pantry, improving outreach and awareness, and providing other food-related resources. In fact, our campus pantry has been an incredible success and is now in the midst of a major upgrade in order to better serve our campus community. Our student government was proud to allocate \$47,000 in support of their expansion, which will allow our pantry to thousands of students and host cooking demos, which is a major step towards increasing food literacy and encouraging healthy eating. Despite all this, we must do more as a state to put an end to campus hunger.

This bill takes a number of steps towards addressing food insecurity on college campuses. First, by establishing a hunger task force on each campus, we can ensure that there are always advocates for our students who face food insecurity. Second, by designating a staff member responsible for hunger issues, campus community members will know where to go with questions and where to direct students experiencing food insecurity. This position will also help with connecting food insecure students to appropriate resources. And lastly, this bill provides incentives to our state's institutions to make ending campus hunger a priority.

This bill will protect our most vulnerable students by reducing the barriers to food security and ensure that they can focus on the most important part of college: their education. We urge a favorable report on the Hunger Free Campus Grant Program.

Sincerely,
Dan Alpert, *Student Body President*
Ben Baitman, *Director of Government Affairs*

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https://studentaffairs.umd.edu/sites/studentaffairs.umd.edu/files/food_access_student_well-being_study_report_september2019.pdf

MaryPIRG Students SB0767 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Anand, Greeshma

Position: FAV

MaryPIRG strongly encourages members of the Maryland General Assembly to vote YES on SB0767, which will establish the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program to address hunger and food insecurity on college campuses. The establishment of Hungry Free Campuses is a crucial step in alleviating food insecurity and addressing basic food needs that college students experience.

MaryPIRG is a non-partisan student organized and funded group at the University of Maryland which uses grassroots organizing tactics to tackle issues pertinent to students. One of which being student hunger and food insecurity. Our campaign, Zero Hunger, works closely with this issue and has seen the ways in which food insecurity devastates those affected.

As students, we understand the unique stressors that food insecurity incites in students suffering from this very relevant and important issue. Many students dealing with these stressors experience anxiety, self-esteem issues, depression, lower GPAs, and higher chances of withdrawing, among many others. For many, the price of college is unobtainable, causing them to cut corners elsewhere to afford it, typically by skipping meals. Or, simply put, many students cannot afford to eat. This is a pernicious issue, as going to college and receiving higher education should not be a competition between paying tuition and buying groceries; buying textbooks and eating healthy; or getting a degree and eating three meals a day.

Despite certain resources that may be already available, it is evident that students continue to suffer from hunger related issues. As stated in the UMD Food Access and Student Well-Being Study, % undergraduate and graduate students are food insecure. Now, that study was conducted in 2017. Imagine the amount of students affected today, with the pandemic inducing economic instability— it's likely this number has drastically increased.

One student we are familiar with is a college student at UMD living off campus without a meal plan. He is a hardworking, studious computer science student trying to make ends meet. Without a meal plan and rent to pay, he rarely has the funds to buy food. It got so severe that he had to reach out to friends and ask for food, because there was nothing he had available. Resorting to fast food was sometimes the only option he had, taking up unhealthy eating habits that negatively affected his mental and physical well-being. A bill which makes food accessible and readily available would be a significant help to students like this who need the resource.

While society may soon return to normal, the economic hardships incited may not be soon to go. This is why it's crucial the MGA begin to take action against student hunger and food insecurity. Through the SB0767 bill, Hunger-Free college campuses will be allocated resources to better serve their community, leading to a more food secure environment. At MaryPIRG, we

understand food insecurity to be a multifaceted issue, with many approaches needed to be taken to amend it, but we believe the SB0767 bill is a step in the right direction for addressing student concerns. This is why we urge MGA members to vote yes on SB0767.

Sincerely,

Ayanna Chambers

Zero Hunger Coordinator and MaryPIRG Visibility Chair and Secretary

Buckley Sake

Zero Hunger Coordinator and MaryPIRG Treasurer

Greeshma Anand

Board Chair of MaryPIRG Students

CE Ball 2021 SB 767 - Hunger Free Campus Grant.pdf

Uploaded by: Ball, Calvin

Position: FAV



HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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March 9, 2021

Senator Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 West
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21041

Re: Testimony **IN SUPPORT** of SB 767: Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Committee,

I am pleased to announce my strong support for Senate Bill 767, which would help address student hunger at our institutions of higher education by establishing a hunger-free grant program. Throughout the pandemic, we've been reminded how vitally important it is for state and local governments to ensure adequate access to food.

In Howard County, we established a COVID Response Food program for residents who, for multiple reasons, found themselves unable to access existing food resources in the county. These barriers to access include transportation, loss of income due to COVID, and health limitations, among others. Thus far, we have served nearly 4,000 families, provided over 7,000 meal kits, and over 2,000 grocery boxes. Our data also show that a staggering 100 percent of families who received assistance through this program returned for more. This shows how essential of a service food access is.

As a former educator in Baltimore institutions of higher education, who often worked with students facing economic challenges, I often witnessed students struggling to manage tuition, books and basic necessities. These students were so dedicated to obtaining their education, they often went without meals. In my time as Director of Complete College Baltimore, I was tasked with advocating and coordinating efforts to promote student success, increase retention and graduation rates. We designed education programs and trainings for students who may be "at risk" and in need of early intervention or other support resources.

As higher education's student body grows more diverse with access expanding for parents with children or students from lower income communities, I fully support the government taking a proactive approach to adapt to the population's needs so that everyone, regardless of ability or zip code, has an equitable chance to succeed and live their best lives.

Senate Bill 767 would provide both a sound framework and seed funding to allow 4-year institutions and community colleges to implement individualized programs at the school level. In Howard County, we embrace innovation and aspire to be a model healthy, sustainable community for all. I am certain that should this bill become law, my Administration will be eager to work with Howard Community College to effectively connect students in need to healthy food.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 767.

Sincerely,

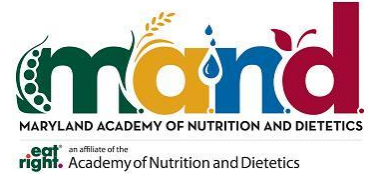
Calvin Ball
Howard County Executive

MAND - Support - SB767 - Higher Education - Hunger

Uploaded by: Brocato, Barbara

Position: FAV

MARYLAND ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS



Date: March 9, 2021

Bill: SB0767– Higher Education – Hunger Free Campus Grant Program - Established

Committee: Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Paul Pinsky, Chair

Position: FAVORABLE

The Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND), is an organization representing approximately 1,200 licensed dietitians and nutritionists, dietetic interns, and students within the state of Maryland.

Senate Bill 767, the Hunger Free Campus Grant Program aims to create a state-funded matching grant program to provide campuses with the resources to become a “Hunger-Free Campus.” This would entail the following actions: Establish a Hunger-Free Task Force; connect eligible students with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); provide on-campus food resources, raise awareness for food insecurity through campus events to reduce food insecurity stigma; and create a meal plan swipe-sharing program.

Food insecurity among college students has become an emerging public health and educational concern among colleges and universities across the country. Recent studies report between 30-50% of college students experience some level of food insecurity that is nearly two-fold higher than the general public. Food insecurity in the past has disproportionately affected students of color, older students, parenting students, former foster youth, and first-generation college students.

A research study was done at the University of Maryland to measure the prevalence of food insecurity among its students (4,901 students). About 20% of UMD students surveyed were food insecure at some point in the 12 months preceding the survey, with 13% experiencing low levels of food security and 7% experiencing very low levels of food security. An additional 21% of the respondents reported marginal food insecurity levels. Consequently, marginal food insecurity and food insecure added up to 41%.(4)

The statistics are even more pronounced at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). For example, a 2018 survey of students, faculty, staff and administrators was conducted by Morgan State University’s Division of Student Affairs, 68 percent of the students who were surveyed said they were food insecure. The survey also found that 71 percent of students reported skipping meals because they had a limited supply of food, and 67 percent said they borrowed food or money due to a lack of food.(5) Nutrition professionals who are affiliated with

colleges and universities across the country have the potential to lead efforts to improve food security status of college students.

MAND stands ready as a resource and partner in this important undertaking. Thank you for your consideration of our comments. We respectfully ask for a **FAVORABLE** report on Senate Bill 767.

Dr. Glenda L. Lindsey, Dr. PH, MS, RDN, LDN
Public Policy Coordinator

Helene Fletcher RDN, LDN
MAND President

Public Policy Panel

References:

1. Bruening M, Woerden IV, Todd M, Laska MN. Hungry to learn: The prevalence and effects of food insecurity on health behaviors and outcomes over time among a diverse sample of university freshmen. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act.* 2018;15:9.
2. US Government Accountability Office. Food insecurity: Better information could help eligible college students access federal food assistance benefits. Published January 9, 2019. <https://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-19-95>. Accessed February 21, 2019.
3. Knol LL, Robb CA, McKinley EM, Wood M. Very low food security status is related to lower cooking self-efficacy and less frequent food preparation behaviors among college students. *J Nutr Educ Behav.* 2019;51:357–363.
4. https://studentaffairs.umd.edu/sites/studentaffairs.umd.edu/files/food_access_student_well-being_study_report_september2019.pdf .Accessed March 2, 2021
5. https://news.morgan.edu/food_resource_center/ . Accessed March 2, 2021.

SB 767 Testimony K. Brown 03.21 FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Brown, Akyra

Position: FAV



HOMELESS PERSONS REPRESENTATION PROJECT, INC.

201 North Charles Street, Suite 1104 Baltimore, MD 21201

SUPPORT – SB 767: Higher Education – Hunger Free Campus Grant Program – Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs March 9, 2020

Testimony of Kyra Brown, Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc.

The Homeless Persons Representation Project, Inc. (HPRP) is a non-profit legal services provider that provides free legal representation to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness on legal issues that will lead to an end to homelessness. HPRP's Homeless Youth Initiative serves unaccompanied homeless youth ages 24 and younger.

The Homeless Persons Representation Project (HPRP) strongly supports SB 767. This bill will aid in creating a safety net for lower income college students who are experiencing food insecurity. In doing so this bill will also lead to equitable attainment of education for all students and create stability so that other basic needs, such as housing, will be more readily accessible.

Students experiencing food insecurity are more likely to experience difficulties focusing in their classes, and are more likely to experience housing insecurity. As food insecurity is highly correlated with housing insecurity and vice versa,¹ which in turn affect academic stability and success, it makes sense for public universities to make food more accessible for students. In state-sponsored schools that generate millions of dollars in revenue it is unimaginable that students would be going hungry on-campus. However, it is an unfortunate reality that every school year some students are not only unsure of how they will afford housing but also of how they will afford food. In struggling with getting these basic needs met many students' grades will start to suffer. SB 767 creates a safety net so that a basic necessity of life, food, is readily available for all students on-campus to receive without any barriers in place. In making sure that these basic needs are met colleges and universities put their students first which will only have a positive impact on their students' lives. When these basic needs are met one less stressor is in the way of attaining stability through higher education.

Students experiencing food insecurity often exist at the intersection of other marginalized identities that can further exacerbate the trauma of poverty. Youth, POC, TLGBQ+ students, students with children, and students at the intersections of these identities exist as particularly vulnerable communities who experience systemic barriers to accessing higher education and are often further victimized by housing insecurity, food insecurity, and poverty. These compounding oppression association with these identities can make it difficult to be present in class or complete coursework while trying to heal from trauma. In providing their lower-income students with tools that can create stability, as SB 767 would do, colleges simply make life easier and more equitable for students. The trauma of poverty should not stand as a barrier to receiving a quality education. No student should ever feel abandoned by their college because they cannot easily and readily attain food security. Many students struggle with food insecurity because of not only the shame that surrounds being impoverished but also because campuses do not have resources available to students. SB 767 puts the needs of impoverished students first, and helps to make their struggle less hidden and shameful. To create an equitable education environment the basic needs of every student should be met.

HPRP strongly urges the committee to issue a Favorable Report on SB 767.

Please contact Akira Brown at abrown@hprplaw.org for additional information.

1. WASHINGTON POST, HOUSING AND FOOD INSECURITY AFFECTING MANY COLLEGE STUDENTS, AVAILABLE AT: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/02/20/housing-food-insecurity-affecting-many-college-students-new-data-says/>

SB 767_Hunger-Free Campus sign-on letter_FAVORABLE

Uploaded by: Gross, Julia

Position: FAV

March 9, 2021

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 767

Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Dear Chair and members of the Committee,

The undersigned Maryland organizations strongly support SB 767, which is designed to create and support hunger-free campuses at higher education institutions across the state of Maryland.

This legislation aims to create a state-funded matching grant program that will provide higher education institutions with funding to address food insecurity in their campus community. These grant dollars would be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and go towards efforts such as establishing a Hunger-Free Task Force; designating staff to connect eligible students with SNAP application assistance and local SNAP retailers; establishing a system for stigma-free access to community food resources; raising awareness for food insecurity through campus events in order to reduce stigma; and creating a meal plan swipe sharing program that allows students to donate unused swipes to fellow students in need.

While the pursuit of higher education is often associated with the path towards greater career achievements, this path is often fraught with financial challenges that cause students to struggle with food insecurity along the way. As higher education students grapple with the rising cost of tuition and other expenses associated with their education, they often find themselves with limited resources left for food. On top of which, many students face additional life challenges that put them at even greater risk. For example, research analysis conducted by the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) has found that students of color, older students, former foster youth, parenting students, students who experienced childhood food insecurity, first generation college students, among many others are even more likely than most to experience food insecurity at some point during their studies.

While the issue of hunger in higher education is not new, students still face a number of unique barriers that prevent them from accessing the resources that so many low-income Marylanders rely. For example, off-campus pantries can be challenging to reach, and stigma plays a huge role in preventing many students from seeking help outside of their college community. Additionally, students face extra eligibility requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Although students eligible for work study also qualify for SNAP, few may be aware of their eligibility without guidance from SNAP application specialists.

The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program seeks to bring much needed and long-awaited relief to struggling students across Maryland by funding efforts that specifically target barriers that prevent them from accessing the nutritional support the need to succeed in their studies. As Maryland continues to strive to lead the country in education, we must ensure that students are not forced to suffer hunger or its negative outcomes because of their pursuit of higher education. For this reason, the undersigned

organizations urge the committee to make a critical investment in Maryland's education system and future by providing a favorable report on SB 767.

Thank you for your consideration,

Maryland Hunger Solutions

Maryland Food Bank

Family Learning Solutions, Inc.

Here2Help

Oak Chapel United Methodist Church

Gaithersburg HELP, Inc.

University of Maryland Student Government Association

Rainbow Community Development Center

Main Street Connect

Giovanni Home Care Service

Fair Farms

HarvestShare

MCMF

City of Rockville – Mayor and Council

Bethesda Help

Family League of Baltimore

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Health Care for the Homeless

Montgomery County Food Council

Critical Issues Forum

Homestead Hustle & Healing

Meals on Wheels of Takoma Park/Silver Spring

Public Justice Center

Small Things Matter

Baltimore-Washington Conference of The United Methodist Church

Educational Sustainability Mobilization Inc.

Family Learning Solutions, Inc. @foodgrownhome

Up 2 Us Foundation

Hungry Harvest

Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Marylanders Against Poverty

Community FarmShare

The People's Community Baptist Church

Advocates for Children and Youth

Food & Friends

Maryland Alliance of Public Charter Schools

Support for SB 767 - MD Hunger Solutions.pdf

Uploaded by: Gross, Julia

Position: FAV



March 9, 2021

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 767

Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Maryland Hunger Solutions is a statewide, non-partisan, non-profit organization working to end hunger and improve the nutrition, health, and well-being of individuals, children, and families in Maryland. Maryland Hunger Solutions strives to overcome barriers and create self-sustaining connections between Maryland residents and nutritious foods through education, advocacy, and outreach.

It is in that vein that we strongly support SB 767, which aims to create a state-funded matching grant program to support anti-hunger programs and initiatives at 2 and 4-year public higher education institutions across the state of Maryland.

Through our work, we have partnered with multiple colleges and universities to provide SNAP outreach to food-insecure students. We have assisted students from University of Baltimore, Prince George's Community College, and Montgomery County Community College. We have also provided SNAP outreach training at the Community College of Baltimore County and consulted with administrators at the University of Maryland. Many students at these institutions are balancing classes, jobs, internships, as well as families of their own and other personal life demands. However, those facing food insecurity have increased challenges of determining what and when they'll be eating next, as well as potential stigmatization of their circumstances.

Food insecurity on higher education campuses is not a new phenomenon and can be found on even the most well-resourced campuses, however this need often goes unseen and unaddressed. Traditional views that stereotype college students as recent high school graduates have created a belief system that often normalizes food insecurity because it is seen as temporary. Higher education is often viewed as a steppingstone to career success for young, middle class individuals supported by their parents. These societal constructs are not only harmful but often lead to internalized stigma that prevents students from seeking help. We know that Maryland's student body is diverse, and our higher education system includes a variety of individuals working toward their educational and career goals, including veterans, parents, grandparents, in addition to those facing unique life struggles such as homelessness. For some college students, especially those with higher risk, such as first generation students, students of color, older students, former foster youth, parenting students, students who experienced childhood food insecurity, among many others, being food insecure is a reality they face every day at home and at school. As higher education students struggle to balance rising cost of tuition, living expenses, other expenses associated with their education, they often find themselves with limited resources left for food.

A recent pre-pandemic nationwide survey by the Hope Center found that among 167,000 students surveyed from 171 two-year and 56 four-year institutions, 39% were food insecure in the prior 30 days.ⁱ

In fact, research analysis from the [Food Research & Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) has found that most studies done on college hunger have concluded that food insecurity rates among U.S. college students are higher than the national average for adults.ⁱⁱ This struggle impact more than just physical health. Another can cause more than just damaging health impacts, also physical, mental strain, lower grade and higher dropout rates. Another study at the University of Maryland found that the constant stress of food insecurity has adverse effects on academic performance and mental health, leading to increased risk of dropping out of school altogether.ⁱⁱⁱ Additionally, we know that students are not the only population on campus that struggle with food insecurity. There are many low-income faculty and staff members that also benefits from on-campus resources.

The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program looks to raise the awareness of the issue of campus hunger and provides both short-and-long term solutions. The grant dollars outlined in SB 767 would be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and go towards efforts to address food insecurity on campuses. The recipients of this grant would work to establish a Hunger-Free Task Force that would set goals and actions towards eliminating hunger among the campus community through designating staff to connect eligible students with SNAP application assistance and local SNAP retailers; establishing a system for stigma-free access to community food resources; raising awareness for food insecurity through campus events in order to reduce stigma; and creating a meal plan swipe sharing program that allows students to donate unused swipes to fellow students in need.

While campus and community pantries are great resources, there are those who do not access it due to fear of stigmatization or due to not knowing that those resources even exist. Having a dedicated staff member at each campus with the knowledge of existing programs will help put students at ease, as well as quicken their ability to access needed programs. In particular, having staff on campus who can help students navigate the SNAP application process or refer eligible students to organizations who can help with application assistance, will be critical for ensuring that eligible students are not prevented from using this critical lifeline that so many Marylanders rely on during times of need.

For college students, SNAP eligibility is based on meeting 20+ hours a week of work, work-study, and/or volunteering. Even though this requirement has been temporarily waived due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SNAP eligibility can still be complicated and difficult for students to navigate on their own. Many of the students we've assisted with applying for SNAP meet the work requirement, though were unaware of their eligibility for SNAP. The Hunger-Free Campus Program includes notifying students who participate in work-study of their eligibility for SNAP and could greatly increase participation among students in accessing a program that is proven to assist low-income households.

For students that are unable to access SNAP due to not meeting work requirements, having additional food resources on campus is essential. The creation of a food pantry that all students and campus community members, such as low-income faculty, staff, and contract workers, can access discretely not only reduces stigma, it can be a lifeline for those facing difficult situations. One such student approached us at Prince George's Community College, where a fire had unfortunately destroyed her apartment. She was thankfully able to find housing with a friend, but her SNAP dollars had run out and she needed food immediately. The campus pantry was able to meet those needs. While her situation is rare, having an



Maryland Hunger Solutions

Ending hunger and promoting well-being

on-campus pantry, as well as knowledgeable staff, creates more support systems for students and other food insecure campus community members when they need them.

While this bill won't solve the issue of hunger completely, it is taking a huge step in the right direction by providing an important investment by the state in our higher education system. Hungry students can't learn, and we know college students are no exception. The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program will assist in de-stigmatizing food insecurity by allowing students to maintain their dignity during a time in their life where they should be focused on learning, not worrying about where their next meal is coming from.

Additionally, by enacting SB 767, we can ensure that no Marylander is deterred from achieving their full educational dreams because of the threat of hunger or its harmful effects, nor will they be forced to suffer disproportionately from food insecurity because of their pursuit of higher education.

Thank you for your consideration. Maryland Hunger Solutions **urges a favorable report on SB 767.**

ⁱ #RealCollege 2020: Five Years of Evidence on Campus Basic Needs Insecurity: https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2019_RealCollege_Survey_Report.pdf

ⁱⁱ FRAC Research Wire: <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/researchwire-summer-2018.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://studentaffairs.umd.edu/sites/studentaffairs.umd.edu/files/food_access_student_well-being_study_report_september2019.pdf

MAP - SB 767 - FAVORABLE.pdf

Uploaded by: Jefferson , Stacey

Position: FAV



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 767

Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

March 9, 2021

Submitted by Stacey Jefferson and Julia Gross, Co-Chairs

Member Agencies:

Advocates for Children and Youth
Baltimore Jewish Council
Behavioral Health System Baltimore
CASH Campaign of Maryland
Catholic Charities
Episcopal Diocese of Maryland
Family League of Baltimore
Fuel Fund of Maryland
Health Care for the Homeless
Homeless Persons
Representation Project
Job Opportunities Task Force
League of Women Voters of Maryland
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Catholic Conference
Maryland Center on Economic Policy
Maryland Community Action
Partnership
Maryland Family Network
Maryland Hunger Solutions
Mental Health Association of
Maryland
Paul's Place
Public Justice Center
St. Vincent de Paul of Baltimore
Welfare Advocates

Marylanders Against Poverty

Stacey Jefferson, Co-Chair
P: 410-637-1900 ext 8578
C: 443-813-9231
E: stacey.jefferson@bhsbaltimore.org

Julia Gross, Co-Chair
P: 410-528-0021x6029
E: jgross@mdhungersolutions.org

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports SB 767, which aims to create a state-funded Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission to fund anti-hunger programs and initiatives on 2 and 4-year campuses. The Hunger-Free Campus Program will raise awareness of services available both on and off campus for food-insecure students by establish a stigma-free system for accessing community resources, and designate a staff member on campus to assist students with enrolling in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

College hunger is an issue that has often gone unseen and under-addressed. However, it is prevalent on even the most well-resourced campuses. A pre-pandemic study done by the Hope Center found that among 167,000 students surveyed from 171 two-year and 56 four-year institutions, 39% were food insecure in the prior 30 days.¹ Being food insecure is often compounded by other struggles of living in poverty, which can make achieving one's educational goals especially difficult.

Establishing the Hunger-Free Campus Program seeks to alleviate some of that burden by reducing the barriers students face when accessing much needed food resources. Designating a staff member to assist with navigating the SNAP application process will greatly increase SNAP participation for eligible students. The application process can be difficult to understand and having a trusted support system to provide guidance can be critical for participation in a program that is proven to lift people out of poverty. Additionally, ensuring that each institution will provide an on-campus pantry or a system which provides stigma-free access to existing community pantries will allow students and other low-income campus community members to quickly receive the assistance they need from a place they trust.

College students should be worried about their studies, not about their next meal. The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program is a smart investment in Maryland's higher education system and will lay down the groundwork needed to continue addressing food insecurity in the future.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 767.

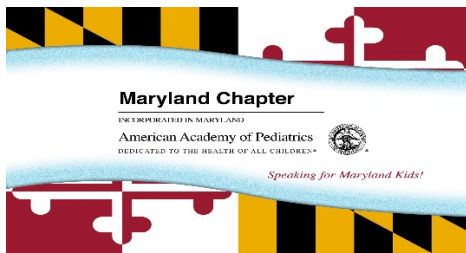
Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.

¹ #RealCollege 2020: Five Years of Evidence on Campus Basic Needs Insecurity:
https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2019_RealCollege_Survey_Report.pdf

SB0767_FAV_MDAAP_Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

Uploaded by: Kasemeyer, Pam

Position: FAV



TO: The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky, Chair
Members, Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
The Honorable Mary Washington

FROM: Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: March 9, 2021

RE: **SUPPORT** – Senate Bill 767 – *Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Established*

The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP) is a statewide association representing more than 1,100 pediatricians and allied pediatric and adolescent healthcare practitioners in the State and is a strong and established advocate promoting the health and safety of all the children we serve. On behalf of MDAAP, we submit this letter of **support** for Senate Bill 767.

Senate Bill 767 establishes a Hunger Free Campus Grant program that is designed to address food insecurity and hunger on Maryland's college campuses. The program is structured to facilitate the leveraging of more sustainable solutions to basic food needs on college campuses; raise awareness amongst students of services currently offered on campus or in the surrounding community that address basic food needs; and build strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to address food insecurity among students. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Commission.

College students face many challenges in navigating a successful path through their college experience. Hunger and food insecurity only exacerbates the challenges for the most vulnerable students. Passage of Senate Bill 767 will provide one additional tool for the State to assist these students in addressing hunger issues, thereby enabling them to focus on their pathway to graduation and a successful transition to the workplace. A favorable report is requested.

For more information call:

Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
410-244-7000

MD Catholic Conference_FAV_HB0767.pdf

Uploaded by: Kraska, MJ

Position: FAV



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 9, 2021

SB 767

Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

Position: Support

The Maryland Catholic Conference (“Conference”) represents the public policy interests of the three Roman Catholic (arch)dioceses serving Maryland: the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington.

Senate Bill 767 would establish the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program through the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC), which would work to address and combat student hunger and basic food necessities on college and university campuses throughout the state. It would further certify campuses that meet criteria such as the creation of a Hunger Task Force and providing a food pantry on campus as “hunger-free,” as well as provide assistance to those needing to apply for food supplement benefits.

The Church is a strong and steady voice for programs that help alleviate poverty and its effects, stating that “[o]ur commitment to the dignity of every person requires a special concern for those who are poor and vulnerable, whose needs are greatest, and whose lives and dignity are often threatened by hunger, poverty, and suffering.” (*For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food*, 2003)

The Conference historically and routinely supports legislation aimed at addressing food insecurity and other such poverty ailments among vulnerable and often marginalized populations in the state. A common misconception is that a student pursuing higher education means that they or their families are financially secure. In reality, this is not always the case, as students are often unable to escape the burdens of poverty in all educational grade levels and pursuits. Students at colleges and universities who face food insecurity and hunger often exist in the shadows, especially when support systems are either inadequate to address the need or not in place at all. Senate Bill 767 is a crucial first step in addressing this serious and overlooked concern, especially for students who may be additionally vulnerable due to other factors such as citizenship status, familial instability, or other economic barriers, including homelessness.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 767.

Final - CIF MANNA TESTIMONY ON COLLEGE HUNGER FREE

Uploaded by: Lieberman, Jim

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES FORUM: ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL
JUSTICE AND MANNA FOOD CENTER OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD
MARCH 9, 2021
BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE
IN SUPPORT OF SB767 Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program**

Honorable Chair Paul Pinsky, Vice-Chair Cheryl Kagan and Members of the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee:

The Critical Issues Forum: Advocacy for Social Justice (CIF) and Manna Food Center (Manna) provide this testimony in support of SB767, the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.

CIF is a coalition of three synagogues, Temple Beth Ami, Kol Shalom, and Adat Shalom, with over 1,750 households and three denominations of Judaism: Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist. CIF serves as a vehicle for our congregations to speak out on policy issues that relate to our shared values, including the Jewish traditions that emphasize the sanctity and primary value of human life.

Manna Food Center ("Manna") is Montgomery County, Maryland's designated food bank, with a singular mission of eliminating hunger in our county. Through food distribution, education and advocacy, we are making strides on behalf of an estimated 100,000 county residents who experience food insecurity. There were approximately 50,500 participants who received supplemental food and services from Manna in FY20 including 3.3 million pounds of food distributed at more than a dozen locations. During the pandemic and resulting economic crises, Manna has met the substantial increase in demands while staying safe and committed to a vision of Food for All.

While Maryland has established several programs to address food insecurity for students from elementary to high school, it is less well-known that food insecurity is a significant and growing issue on many college campuses. In a current nationwide survey sent to 1.5 million students at 123 colleges and universities, based on 86,000 responses, it was shown that 48% of community college students and 41% of four-year university students were food insecure. (***College and University Basic Needs Insecurity: A National Real College Report, April 2019***).

A study at the University of Maryland found food insecurity is a pervasive concern demonstrating adverse effects on academic performance and physical and mental health. About 20% of UMD students surveyed were food insecure at some point in the last year.

UMD has the second -lowest percentage of low-income students of all public higher education institutions in the state. Yet one out of 5 students at UMD are food insecure. ***(Maryland Today, Survey Finds Food Insecurity Among Terps. Sept. 25, 2019))***

We are privileged to include the real-life experiences of Odessa Davis, a volunteer on the Manna Food Center Advocacy Task Force, and also representing The Critical Issues Forum. Odessa's reflections provide valuable insight into the entire issue we are addressing. Here is Odessa's story:

I know that hunger challenges students of any age to both learn and concentrate. As a recent graduate of Montgomery College (proudly with honors) and the mother of a son in Montgomery County Public Schools, I have experienced personally the struggles involved. My story began at Kennedy High School and Thomas Edison High School of Technology where I followed my dream of becoming a chef. I then studied and graduated from the Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts-Miami and returned with my son to the Rockville area and a changed dream. My new goal required careful discipline and lots of support. I was a single mom with an AA degree and hoped to move forward to a 4-year degree in Business Management. I had to start all over again. With the help of the Director of the Education Opportunity Center (EOC) at Montgomery College, a supportive family and friend network, and local financial help through scholarships, I have graduated and will be starting at the UMD Global Campus this fall. What challenges did I have during this journey?

My son and I were financially limited despite holding down four jobs at one point, including working in MCPS. While my salary was small, I was over the benefit level that allowed for Federal support (SNAP) so I had to depend on the MC Food Pantry as well as snacks provided in the Writing Center to help out. My son received breakfast and lunch at school except on holidays, weekends, and the summer months. Montgomery College also would periodically hold group events where produce and/or clothing would be available for those in need. I was a single parent stressed by several issues: finances, food insecurity, and academic challenges. I started a club at Montgomery College called "Back on Track" to bring a small group of similarly challenged adult students together. This year, 50% of our group was successful in graduating. During the pandemic, the challenge has become harder and the needs greater.

With the encouragement of the EOC at Montgomery College, I provided testimony to the County Council and became a volunteer on the Manna Advocacy Task Force. The issue of food insecurity that I have experienced and witnessed among my peers is only growing as costs escalate. I would never have succeeded without the help of the MC Food Pantry, group produce opportunities and the snacks provided at the writing center. The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program recognizes this vital need.

Food insecurity has the greatest impact on: first-generation college students, racial/ethnic minority students, international students, those with an immigrant background, transfer

students, single parents, those who identify as transgender/gender non-conforming, students with a disability, students who were divorced or separated, and those from a lower socioeconomic background as well as students who worked longer hours and were financially independent. This group is large and the impact of the pandemic has exacerbated the situation. (***UMD Food Access & Student Well-being Study, A Report by the UM Counseling Center Research Unit, Sept. 26, 2019 and <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/college-hunger-research>***).

Food insecurity has pervasive impacts on student well-being, academic performance, and professional/career development. Multiple studies including the UMD and the CSES (APA's Committee on Socioeconomic Status) emphasize the broad impact of food insecurity on students' ability to remain in college and complete their degree (***American Psychological Association, Reducing Hunger on Campus, Heather Stringer, March 1, 2020, vol.51, No. 2***)

This is a real issue for Maryland colleges including in Montgomery County. Manna Food Center regularly works with students and staff at the Universities of Shady Grove and Montgomery College to support the functioning of campus-based pantries.

In an article published by Maryland Food Bank, 3,800 students at 34 community and four-year colleges across 12 states were surveyed. In the study, almost half (48%) of the respondents reported food insecurity and 22% admitted very low levels which would qualify them as hungry. Most of these students are working, received financial aid, and many were on meal plans. However, only 25% were using SNAP. In this same article, the interviewers reported on a visit to Towson University where they spoke with a student experiencing food insecurity as well as an administrator who suspected issues when multiple students eagerly ate the trail mix on her desk. The 19-year sophomore said:

Being food insecure is hard, embarrassing, and comes with so many emotions . . . FoodShare* has allowed me to focus more on my studies and not where my next meal is coming from

**FoodShare and FISF (Food Insecurity Support Fund) are a two-pronged plan at Towson that provides immediate financial assistance to students in need through meal cards and allows those in need to take up to 10 food or personal care items from the food pantry at a time. (<https://mdfoodbank.org/news/college-hunger-101-food-insecurity>).*

SB767, by establishing in Maryland a Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program, will help address this growing issue of food insecurity at our State public two and four-year college institutions. Although Maryland campus communities are beginning to address these issues by providing access to nutritious food through food pantries, expanding SNAP enrollment, drive-by no contact meal kits and CSA boxes, swipe sharing programs, and allocation of food gift cards, these efforts are stretching their limited resources. Financial support from the State linked with appropriate guidelines will greatly assist in this effort (***GAO report 19-95, Food Insecurity: Better Information Could Help Eligible College Students Access Federal Assistance Benefits, Dec. 2018***).

In recent studies from the UMD, student comments have been revealing on their reaction to food insecurity. These individual quotes are real-life commentary on the impact of food insecurity. (***UMD Food Access & Student Well-being Study – UMD Student Affairs, 2019***).

I was ‘so stressed because you have to always think about the budgeting ... how to get food, where to get it cheaper ... rather than spending time studying’; or a graduate student who remarked ‘I definitely felt guilty . . . I’m in graduate school . . . I should be able to handle this ... I failed at being an adult because I wasn’t able to pay for my own groceries ... like a feeling of shame and stress’; a student commented on the social implications ‘It’s hard for me to tell my friends I don’t have enough money, and sometimes embarrassing that you don’t have enough money to participate ... it feels like you’re being an outcast.’ .

It’s vital to invest in Maryland’s future and this grant program achieves that goal. Food insecurity is a widespread issue on Maryland’s College campuses and this program will address:

1. Student hunger in an equitable manner for those who may not be able to afford both adequate food and higher education. Provide on-campus food resources, such as a food pantry, or establish a stigma-free system for accessing community resources
2. Leverage more sustainable solutions to address basic food needs on public campuses
3. Raise awareness of services currently available but not widely known (SNAP & WIC) and connect students with these resources
4. Build strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national levels to address food insecurity among students. Use campus media to both inform students and reduce stigma.
5. Establish a campus-level Hunger-Free Task Force and work with local community food banks, grocery stores, restaurants and other resources to address the need.
6. Develop and maintain a meal-sharing program that allows students to donate their unused meal plan credits to those in need
7. Provide emergency assistance.

The CIF and Manna strongly support SB767 allowing the State of Maryland to create the Hunger-Free Campus Program. It will improve all college students’ ability at both two-year and four-year public schools to graduate and become productive citizens of Maryland.

HungerFreeCampus-TU Letter of Support.pdf

Uploaded by: Morales, Amy

Position: FAV



March 2, 2021

Members of the Appropriation Committee,

Division of Student Affairs

8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

The Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs at Towson University includes the Office of Case Management which provides outreach, support, and advocacy for our students. We assist students in navigating difficult situations that would otherwise impact their education. These difficulties include all manner of challenges—everything from mental health and bereavement to homelessness and financial literacy. Food insecurity is one of the most prevalent yet overlooked issues facing this generation of learners and has only increased since the COVID-19 Pandemic. Most would agree food is a fundamentally basic human need and assume students attending university do not go hungry however, this is not the case.

Unfortunately for many students, food expenditures often suffer when considering a monthly budget. At a minimum, the cost of attending college includes the price of tuition and books but for many students, especially those who support themselves, there are other expenses such as housing, transportation, and medical costs. At the end of the month when all those bills are due, we often work with students who have skipped several meals in order to afford their rent.

Even if the most conservative estimates are true, 1 in 5 college students experience food insecurity. The proposed bill would not only offer monetary support to those of us combating the issue but also create a state recognized baseline for success. While it is our hope that many institutions will aim to exceed that baseline, the recognition and awareness offered by this bill would be a monumental step forward.

If passed, the proposed bill would directly benefit many of the students that we have had the privilege of serving. This bill would help the mother who went back to school so she could provide more for her family, support the first generation student who worked two jobs during the day so they could attend nursing school at night, and even support the student who earned a scholarship to a nationally ranked program, but struggled to afford regular and nutritious meals. In short, supporting this bill means supporting the people who are working hard to improve their future and the future of everyone living in Maryland. Thank you for your consideration, and we respectfully request a favorable report on SB-0767.

410.704.2055
studentaffairs@towson.edu
www.towson.edu/studentaffairs

SB0767_FAV_Montgomery County Food Council.pdf

Uploaded by: Nardi, Catherine

Position: FAV



March 9, 2021

2021 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL: SB767: Higher Education - Hunger Free Campus Grant Program - Established
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
POSITION: Testimony of Support of Senate Bill 0767
BILL ANALYSIS: Establishing the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program to address student hunger and basic food needs on campus; requiring the Maryland Higher Education Commission to administer the Program, develop a certain form, and designate certain campuses as hunger-free campuses; authorizing certain public institutions of higher education to develop certain procedures and make certain information publicly available; requiring the Governor, beginning in fiscal year 2023, to include in the annual budget bill a \$150,000 appropriation for the Program; etc.

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

The Montgomery County Food Council urges you to **SUPPORT** this bill as it seeks to improve food access for Maryland college students experiencing food insecurity.

The economic downturn that has continued to worsen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenges that college students face in managing school-related costs and has caused an increase in food insecurity on college campuses. Many low-income students have been forced to borrow more money, work more hours, take fewer courses, or drop out altogether due to the downturn. When seeking employment opportunities, students are limited by their school schedules and a challenging job market due to COVID-19. After deducting necessary costs such as rent, tuition, electricity, medication and childcare, college students are often left without adequate funds to spend on food. This was a problem before COVID-19, which has only been exacerbated over the past year.

Without proper nutrition, students face the risk of poor concentration, depression, and other negative effects on their ability to study and complete their courses. During the fall of 2020, the "Grover to Go" program at the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) in Rockville, Maryland, which offers students free pantry items, experienced a 33% increase in the number of students served as compared to the fall of 2019. Pre-pandemic, as recently as 2019, at least 20% of students at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD-CP) were experiencing food insecurity¹, which is a 15% increase from 2015. UMD-CP found that students experiencing food insecurity typically had lower GPAs, and were more likely to withdraw from the school before finishing their degree, compared to food secure students. School meal programs in K-12 institutions are a proven strategy to significantly reduce food insecurity and improve educational outcomes, and the Hunger Free Campus Grant Program would promote a healthier, more capable student population in higher-education institutions throughout Maryland.

For these reasons, the Montgomery County Food Council supports SB0767 and urges you to vote **FOR** this bill.

¹ 2019 Survey conducted by Dr. Yu-Wei Wang at the University of Maryland, College Park



The Montgomery County Food Council is an independent council formed and led by individual community members and representatives of local businesses, government, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Our mission is to bring together a diverse representation of stakeholders to improve the environmental, economic, social and nutritional health of Montgomery County, Maryland through the creation of a robust, local, sustainable food system. Our vision is to cultivate a vibrant food system in Montgomery County that consciously produces, distributes, and recycles food, making it accessible to all residents while promoting the health of the local food economy, its consumers, and the environment.

For more information, please contact: Heather Bruskin, MCFC Executive Director at the email and phone number below.



Support for SB 767 - GP - Senate.pdf

Uploaded by: Pinares, Gianiree

Position: FAV

To: Hon. Chair Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee
Re: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 767
Higher Education – Hunger–Free Campus Grant Program – Established
Date: March 9, 2021

Dear Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

My name is Gianiree Pinares, I am a current student at Montgomery College. I am writing you today to support this bill because as a teen mom and current student I do not want my son to stop pursuing his dreams because of hunger.

This bill is about feeding our youth, let's have in consideration that our actions today will impact their tomorrow and therefore our future, because when it is time for us to step down, it will be their moment to guide us.

When I enrolled in Montgomery College, back in 2019; I was excited to start my medical career but a couple months later my family's economic situation was not the best. I wrote letters to different churches for support because I was not even able to buy food and were owing 4 months of rent and had an eviction order. It was either to spend my small budget on classes or food, that is why I had to drop off college.

This is not only about feeding college students, but also encouraging our youngest population to accomplish their goals, get a higher education, and be able to provide a better future for their families without starving in the process. If this would have been in place back then, I would probably be getting my associate degree as a surgeon in a couple months. If you approve this bill, I will not have to worry about my son being hungry while learning in the future.

Thank you for your consideration, I urge a favorable report on SB 767.

Gianiree
(240) 706-1313
gianire.pinares@gmail.com

SB 767 Support Testimony, Caitlin Silver.pdf

Uploaded by: Silver, Caitlin

Position: FAV



101 College Parkway | Arnold, Maryland 21012-1895 | 410-777-AACC (2222) | www.aacc.edu

Maryland State Senate Committee

March 9, 2021

TESTIMONY

SB 767 Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

Submitted by:

Caitlin Silver, M.S., Basic Needs Coordinator

Anne Arundel Community College

Position: Support

I want to extend my gratitude to the committee for taking the time to hear and acknowledge my testimony concerning HB 891, which is meant to provide supplemental funding for the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program. To the sponsors of this bill, I want to thank you on behalf of all sixteen Maryland Community Colleges, which comprise of over 500,000 students in total.

According to the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, food insecurity is defined as “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner.” It is unsurprising to learn that students who have access to food are more successful and more likely to achieve degree completion. Anecdotally in my role managing the food pantry at Anne Arundel Community College, I have heard students state with no uncertainty that the support from our campus pantry allows them to better focus on their studies, and therefore sets them up to achieve better grades.

Food insecurity represents a monumental barrier to educational completion and success. Hunger represents an immediate need that must continually be addressed. Imagine, if you will, how you would perform your day to day responsibilities on an empty stomach. Perhaps you would feel faint, “hangry,” distracted, agitated. No one does their best work when their body lacks sustenance.

In 2010, Anne Arundel Community College established an on campus food pantry program to provide shelf-stable nonperishable food to students experiencing hunger. Programs like this have grown tremendously over the last decade as awareness of depth of food insecurity for college students has made its way to the forefront attention in the higher educational world. Each of Maryland’s sixteen community colleges recognize the critical role that food access plays in the lives of our students. Whether we’re running on campus pantries, organizing food pickups, or offering fresh produce markets, we understand that students are people first, and helping them to meet their basic needs will allow them to flourish and excel not only in their educational aspirations, but as holistic humans.

I respectfully request your support of this bill so that college campuses in Maryland may continue offering basic needs resources to their students, who in turn will become productive members of our state workforce. Thank you for your time and consideration. On behalf of the Maryland Community Colleges, we are grateful for your dedication to public service, and your support of our students.

Swipe Out Hunger SUPPORT SB 767 (Washington) — Hu

Uploaded by: Sumekh, Rachel

Position: FAV



Swipe Out Hunger
800 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90017
SwipeHunger.org

STUDENT HUNGER IS REAL. WE CAN HELP END IT.

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair of the Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2W Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1990

RE: SUPPORT SB 767 (Washington) — Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Committee Members,

On behalf of Swipe Out Hunger, I am here today to support Senate Bill 767, "The Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program." This vital measure would play an essential and urgent role in addressing hunger amongst Maryland's hard working college students. Our organization appreciates your committee and Sen. Mary Washington's leadership in introducing SB 767.

Before I dive into the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program and the impact it could have on students' futures, I wanted to share a few words from Maryland college students that speak to their experience.

"I would have to go a couple of days without substantial food, and usually there was some nice rice that I was giving my son, and I just didn't eat any of it. Or there would be banquets that I had to go to for school, and I would just take all the food [so I had something to give my son later].

"When the recession hit, my step dad lost his job, and there was a month where my mom wasn't sure if she'd be able to make all the bills. And I ended up giving her my savings so that we could afford to make all the bills and get food."

"[Before going to school,] I made sure that I drank a lot of water because it's free and makes you feel fuller. I'm used to powering through the pain."

Every morning, these students wake up determined to improve themselves, their families, their communities, and their state -- all while facing hunger, poverty, and injustice. Yet, they do not blink or give up; instead, they continue to work, study, and persevere. Don't these students deserve the opportunity to learn and grow?

That's why I'm here today: to fight for the estimated 100,000 Maryland college students who struggled with food insecurity before the COVID-19 crisis and the tens of thousands who will be added to the food insecure as our nation continues to fight the pandemic and its economic consequences.

Sen. Mary Washington and Del. Deborah Davis have taken the first step to end this hunger crisis in Maryland by introducing the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program. I was new and naive to the world of policy when I first wrote this bill four years ago on the same laptop.



Swipe Out Hunger
800 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 200
Los Angeles, CA 90017
SwipeHunger.org

STUDENT HUNGER IS REAL. WE CAN HELP END IT.

First introduced in California, our coalition passed the bill in 2017, sending millions of dollars for the first time to campuses to fight hunger. Since, the bill has been passed in California, New Jersey, and Minnesota, distributing more than 60 million dollars in grants to higher education institutions to end hunger on their campus. With this committee's blessing, I hope to add Maryland to that list of states.

So how have these dollars been making an impact on campus? In the last four years, the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program has:

- Renovated campus pantries with storage/refrigeration.
- Assisted thousands of students with SNAP pre-screenings, applications, and reporting.
- Trained hundreds of faculty, staff, and student leaders in basic needs best practices.
- Hired student assistants to raise awareness and support their peers in accessing anti-hunger programs.
- Launched text message apps, alerting students of leftover food at campus events.
- Collaborated with local restaurants such as Starbucks to receive donated grab-and-go food and local farmers' markets to purchase vouchers for produce.

Through this bill, statewide public institutions can have the opportunity to replicate these efforts in Maryland. Many of Maryland's colleges are already doing this work -- and funding from the Hunger-Free Campus Grant program would add fuel to the fire.

A 2019 study by the University of Maryland food pantry showed that at least 20% of students at the College Park campus experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months. National studies have also shown that one in three college students face food insecurity. These numbers only represent the tip of the iceberg with the continuing economic crisis that often impacts our most vulnerable students, including immigrants, veteran families, former foster youth, first-generation Americans, single parents, and communities of color.

This session, this legislative body made it loud and clear to the people of Maryland that our students' education is of the utmost priority. Maryland should be seen as a shining example of living out our shared values of education, self determination, and community support. Let's make sure that Maryland prioritizes its college students by passing SB 767 out of committee and into law. Thank you for your leadership at this critical time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel Sumekh".

Rachel Sumekh
CEO, Swipe Out Hunger

SB 767 - FAV - UMD College Park - Dr. Yu Wei Wang.

Uploaded by: Wang, Yu-Wei

Position: FAV



DIVISION OF
STUDENT AFFAIRS

COUNSELING CENTER

Chair Paul G. Pinsky
Vice Chair Cheryl C. Kagan
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 3, 2021

Dear Chair Pinsky and Vice Chair Kagan,

My name is Yu-Wei Wang. I am a Clinical Associate Professor, Research Director, and Assistant Director of the Counseling Center at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD). I am writing to provide my support for the Senate Bill 767/House Bill 891 Higher Education–Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program. Research across various U.S. college campuses suggested that many students struggle with food insecurity. Our study with UMD students also revealed that food insecurity has pervasive, negative impacts on our students' academic success, well-being, and long-term career development. I believe that this bill will provide the necessary support for 4-year and 2-year Maryland public institutions of higher education to address campus hunger.

In partnership with our Department of Dining Services, University Health Center, and Maryland Parent and Family Association, we conducted a large-scale survey with 4,901 undergraduate and graduate students (77% and 23% of the total participants, respectively) to investigate the prevalence of food insecurity on our campus during the Fall semester of 2017. Subsequently, we interviewed 23 survey respondents who experienced food insecurity. According to the survey findings, approximately 20% of students were food insecure (i.e., having “limited or uncertain access to adequate food;” United States Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, 2019) at some point in the 12 months preceding the survey.

In addition to rates of food insecurity among our students, we assessed the impacts of food insecurity on academic success. Food insecure students reported that they sometimes had a hard time focusing on their academics, fell asleep in class, or missed class because of hunger. Compared to food secure students, those who were food insecure were more likely to fail an assignment or exam, fail or withdraw from a class, have lower GPAs, or withdraw from the University before completing their degrees. For example, one student told us during the interview:

"I didn't know [if I had a scholarship this semester until one to two weeks ago]. I was thinking ... 'I don't have enough money to buy ... food and pay rent....' So, that was kinda tough ... I was thinking: 'Should I do part time? ...should I drop the semester?'"

Furthermore, food insecurity appears to have an adverse effect on student subjective well-being. On average, compared to their peers, food insecure students experienced poorer health (e.g., losing weight and developing health problems from lack of nutrition), and higher levels of depression, anxiety, distress, anger, and loneliness. The following quote from another interviewee illustrates how food insecurity affects students' mental health:

"I was more depressed than usual, and at one point, I ended up having to go to the hospital because of it. So, it just got really bad. And doctors and my mom probably thought that the food played a big part on my mood being bad. I needed more nutritious food.... I had suicidal ideation, and one of the biggest concerns was financial stuff."

Our research findings also revealed the negative impacts of food insecurity on students' self-esteem, body-image, social relationships, and future career pursuits. Because of food insecurity and financial constraints, some students described feeling like a "failure at adulthood" and avoided any gathering with friends that would cost money. Some of our interviewees indicated that food insecurity limited their ability to network with future colleagues or potential employers (e.g., attending conferences) or take unpaid training opportunities (e.g., internships) due to budget shortages. As a result, our findings suggested that food insecurity may negatively affect students' future career and professional development.

In addition to the impacts of food insecurity on individual well-being and development, students with children also had to worry about their children's health and nutrition as well as their own. One such student shared with us:

"Because I had a child, I had extra expenses, but no increase in the amount of money I was able to get to go to school. Also, SNAP only allowed money for my child's food, so our budget was \$230.00 a month.... This did not leave much for clothing. My boy wore his summer shirts all winter, but wore his coat everywhere, for example."

Overall, stigma around hunger is an ongoing issue. Some students did not use food access resources they qualified for due to embarrassment or shame attached to being poor and food insecure. Others did not know where to find help or avoided asking for assistance because they did not want to take resources away from those who "really need it." The following quote from a student illustrates such struggles:

“Early in my graduate school experience I went through incredible financial difficulty, a brief period of homelessness escaping domestic violence, and limited food access. I cried most nights because I didn't have enough money to make ends meet. Many people thought I was anorexic because I didn't eat much, but there wasn't food at home or time to go grocery shopping, let alone prepare food. I took 3 classes at night, taught 2 during the day and worked another part-time job, still only earning \$1000/month. I was ashamed to tell anyone how bad things were and was scared to ask for help. I didn't know about any resources to help me. A friend was on food stamps and I started an application but with my pay, it seemed I didn't qualify (I made \$50 too much per month to qualify in [a nearby city], where I lived).”

In light of our research findings, a number of actions have been taken on our campus to combat the pervasive, negative impacts of food insecurity on student health and academic performance (for more information, please refer to our report:

<https://studentaffairs.umd.edu/student-life/food-access-student-well-being-study>). For example, our Student Government Association pioneered the Emergency Meal Fund program to help students in need. Also, the INNOVO Scholars Consulting class at the Robert H. Smith School of Business made recommendations for possible solutions for student hunger after conducting a semester-long project on students' struggles with financial and food insecurity. Furthermore, in partnership with Campus Compact Mid-Atlantic and with the support from the Capital Area Food Bank and Maryland Hunger Solutions, the UMD Department of Dining Services—which runs our Campus Pantry—launched a three-year project to address hunger in our community. Also, recently we were selected to receive the NACAS Foundation 2020 Campus Care Grant to support our campus initiatives, research, and services that aim to reduce student hunger. As a result of these efforts, there is a new campus coalition at UMD that focuses on expanding community and off-campus collaborations to address student basic needs, including food and housing security.

In conclusion, consistent with other national studies, our research has clearly demonstrated that food insecurity is a serious concern for many students and that there is a great need for campus-wide, systemic interventions. The Senate Bill 767/House Bill 891 Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program will provide essential resources for Maryland public institutions of higher education to coordinate such efforts on their campuses in order to eliminate student hunger. Therefore, I urge you to vote YES on SB 767/HB 891 because no Marylander should have to choose between finding the next meal and staying in school. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,



Yu-Wei Wang, Ph.D.

Research Director/Assistant Director of the Counseling Center, Clinical Associate Professor

University of Maryland Counseling Center (Division of Student Affairs)
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MLW Written Testimony SB767.pdf

Uploaded by: Washington, Mary

Position: FAV

MARY L. WASHINGTON, PH.D
Legislative District 43
Baltimore City

Education, Health, and
Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair
Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Chair
Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SUPPORT – SB 767
Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program -
Established

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 09, 2021

Testimony of Senator Mary Washington

Chair Pinsky, Vice-Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully urge you to vote favorable on Senate Bill 767, which establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program to address student hunger and basic food needs on college campuses; requires the Maryland Higher Education Commission to administer the Program, develop a certain form, and designate certain campuses as hunger-free campuses; and authorizes certain public institutions of higher education to develop certain procedures and make certain information publicly available.

Students face unique life challenges including balancing long hours of study with work, internships, personal and family life, all while typically taking on debt from student loans. They must also grapple with rising tuition, living expenses, other education related costs, leaving little resources for food.

A University of Maryland study found that food insecurity and the constant stress from hunger has adverse effects on academic performance as well as physical and mental health, leading to increased risk of dropping out of school before graduating.

It is important to note that food insecurity in higher education **is a widespread issue**: a pre-pandemic nationwide survey by the Hope Center found that among 167,000 students surveyed from 171 two-year and 56 four-year institutions, 39% were food insecure in the prior 30 days.

These are staggering statistics, but even more disheartening is the research analysis conducted by the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) that found students of color, older students, former foster youth, parenting students, students who experienced childhood food insecurity, first generation college students, are even more likely than most to experience food insecurity at some point during their studies.

SB 767 aims to create a state-funded matching grant program to provide higher education institutions with funding for programs and initiatives to address food insecurity among their campus community. Grant dollars would be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

Similar legislation has been passed in California and New Jersey, with many other states currently on track to pass Hunger-Free Campus legislation, including Massachusetts, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Washington, Illinois, North Carolina, and New York.

SB767 would enable colleges to buy refrigerators for their food pantries, create SNAP enrollment opportunities, and start a Swipe Out Hunger program, enabling students to donate their leftover meal swipes to their peers who are facing food insecurity on campus.

If Maryland wants to lead the country in education, we must make this critical investment to ensure that students are not forced to suffer hunger or its negative outcomes in their pursuit of higher education.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Senator Mary Washington, District 43, Baltimore City

Testimony in Support of SB 767.pdf

Uploaded by: Wilson, Gabrielle

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of SB 767

Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Established

Senate Hearing, Tuesday, March 9th, 2021

My name is Gabrielle Wilson, and I am the Campus Pantry Organizer and Master of Public Administration candidate at University of Baltimore. I am advocating for your support of Senate Bill 767 as the issue of food and basic needs insecurity in higher education requires immediate attention and action. SB 767 aims to establish a Hunger-Free Campus Grant program to be administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission to designate two- and four-year public institutions that meet a set of anti-hunger requirements as Hunger-Free Campuses and allocate funding to these institutions.

The “starving college student” trope has existed for decades, and the image most have when they hear this is of the 18 year old, fresh out of high school and living off ramen noodles in their dorm room that’s been paid for by their parents. This is seen as a rite of passage in our society, and the image lingers when we talk of college hunger today. It is important to understand why holding on to this image is damaging to our students, their education, and their livelihoods.

We are at a point in time where the “nontraditional” student is becoming a higher percentage of total student population. While there is no agreed upon definition of the nontraditional student, these students are often older, working part- or full-time while in school, may attend school only part-time, are financially independent, and are veterans, returning citizens, and parents (or otherwise have dependents). First-generation and low-income students are also often grouped in this category, even when they are otherwise considered traditional. These students have different needs and interests that are to be addressed when we speak of student support at an institutional level.

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended everyone’s lives, but there truly could not be a worse time to be a college student. The systemic problems we were dealing with before – food and housing insecurity, inequitable access to resources, skyrocketing costs of living and tuition amongst others – have now been exacerbated and compounded by the pandemic. In the last year students have lost jobs, faced eviction, huddled by Wi-Fi hotspots to attend class, couldn’t afford food, lost their health insurance, buried family members they shouldn’t have had to. And still, they are expected to show up to their Zoom class as if none of those things matter, and when their grades drop or they leave school altogether, those students are called “underprepared.” Who could prepare for this?

Speaking from my experience at University of Baltimore both as Campus Pantry Organizer and as a student, I have seen students from every possible background utilize our services. Though we have not been open during the pandemic, we will serve our students again, and the effects this pandemic has had on them will have an impact long after we reach our “new normal.” All of these students have a common goal: to obtain their degree and become self-sufficient.

Institutions have an obligation to support these students, not only because it is the just thing to do, but because it is in the institution's best interest.

At the end of the day, higher education is there to serve the student. When students have their basic needs met, they perform better academically, graduate sooner, and are proud of their institutions. The severity of the impact of college hunger is becoming a national issue, and this bill is an opportunity for Maryland to stand with its students and set an example for other states. I ask for a favorable reporting of SB 767.

For more information, contact Gabrielle Wilson at thegabriellewilson@gmail.com or 203-528-8532
124 Trenton St, Unit 101 Baltimore, MD 21202

Ashlyn Woods SUPPORT SB 767 (Washington) — Hunger-

Uploaded by: Woods, Ashlyn

Position: FAV

Ashlyn Woods
1401 N Charles St,
Baltimore, MD 21201

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair of the Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
2W Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1990

RE: SUPPORT SB 767 (Washington) — Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members,

I am a first-year law student at the University of Baltimore. I am a first-generation college graduate and professional scholar, passionate about advocacy and helping others in my community. Before I started law school, I was an undergraduate student assistant in the University of Baltimore's campus pantry. I am writing this today to offer my support for SB 767 (Washington) -- "Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program.

University of Baltimore's pantry was established to support students, staff, faculty, and alumni by providing wrap-around services like groceries, hygienic items, and even pieces of clothing and school supplies. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the University of Baltimore's pantry distributed between 14,000-16,000 pounds of products each year and, in October of 2019 alone, had more than 1,000 visits.

I took my job very seriously because my position was not just signing people in and out or assisting them with picking the items they needed; most days, I was a confidant and a provider for my community. I ensured that each person was set with their next meal and possibly the only things they would have to eat for the day or the rest of the week.

Many of our clients were only able to visit the pantry once or twice a week, when they may have needed food and supplies well beyond what we could give out each weekly visit. With the enactment of SB 767, the University of Baltimore's campus pantry and other pantries across the University System of Maryland could stay open more days and provide the community with the necessary items to last them until their storm passes.

Maryland needs to enact student anti-hunger legislation because the reality is that people are suffering while trying their hardest to reach the American dream. I've met students and even University of Baltimore staff members who were in suspicious living situations, working full-time, going to school full time, paying bills, taking care of family, and simply struggling to stay alive while being forced to, unfortunately, neglect the most important thing to keep them a part of society – their health.

If this committee and body choose to pass SB 767, it could grant hundreds even thousands of hardworking Maryland students and workers the means to simply eat a decent meal when times get rough. With this bill, campuses all around Maryland can have sufficient campus pantries to support their dedicated students who are struggling in private but somehow manage to pull it together and contribute to our society in a meaningful way every single day.

Sincerely,

Ashlyn Woods
University of Baltimore School of Law
J.D Candidate, 2023
B.A./Jurisprudence, 2021

SB767_USM_FWA_BOUGHMAN - 2021.pdf

Uploaded by: Boughman, Joann

Position: FWA



SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Senate Bill 767

Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program

March 9, 2021

Favorable with Amendments

Joann Boughman

Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts regarding Senate Bill 767. The University System of Maryland believes this bill would offer great opportunities for institutions to serve the needs of its students. For years, our institutions have lived the reality that has been, again, supported by a recent study that found that, “More than 60 percent of students had experienced food insecurity within the past thirty days or housing insecurity/homelessness within the past year.” Furthermore, the survey by the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice ([Linked Here](#)) noted that students who are African American, LGBTQ, former foster youth, or who have prior military service, or are listed as “independent from their parents or guardians for financial aid purposes” have a higher risk of basic needs insecurity. All USM institutions have food pantries, emergency funds, and/or other programs to help students meet their most basic need while they are matriculating at our institutions. The program and grant outlined in SB 767 would help enhance the institutions’ efforts.

USM offers a few points for consideration:

- Regional Higher Education Centers (RHEC) should be included in the bill and/or institutions that receive the hunger-free designation should have to ensure resource access is equitable among all of their students, many of who are studying at a RHEC.
- Institutions should have access to the report and data generated, as it will improve the degree to which institutions can meet students’ needs.
- Some colleges and universities do not have dining halls. Therefore, the section(s) referring to dining halls and meal plans should indicate “if applicable”.
- We wonder if the bill only intends to apply to students in Maryland, as some institutions, significantly, UMGC, have students abroad.

Food insecurity is a predictor of persistence and retention and should be a concern for Universities, especially those serving large numbers of students in higher-risk populations. Being able to meet those students’ needs will help increase their opportunities for success at our institutions and beyond.

Thank you for allowing the USM to share our Favorable with Amendments position on Senate Bill 767.



About the University System of Maryland

The University System of Maryland (USM)—one system made up of 12 institutions, three regional centers, and a central office—awards 8 out of every 10 bachelor’s degrees in the State of Maryland. The USM is governed by a Board of Regents, comprised of 21 members from diverse professional and personal backgrounds. The chancellor, Dr. Jay Perman, oversees and manages the operations of USM. However, each constituent institution is run by its own president who has authority over that university. Each of USM’s 12 institutions has a distinct and unique approach to the mission of educating students and promoting the economic, intellectual, and cultural growth of its surrounding community. These institutions are located throughout the state, from western Maryland to the Eastern Shore, with the flagship campus in the Washington suburbs. The USM includes Historically Black Colleges and Universities, comprehensive institutions, research universities, and the country’s largest public online institution.

SB767_MICUA_LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Fidler, Sara

Position: INFO

Letter of Information

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Senate Bill 767 (Washington) Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program -
Established

Sara C. Fidler, President

sfidler@micua.org

March 9, 2021

On behalf of Maryland's independent colleges and universities and the 65,600 students we serve, thank you for the opportunity to provide information regarding ***Senate Bill 767 (Washington) Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program - Established***. This bill establishes a new grant program available to Maryland public two-year and four-year institutions. Hunger is a growing problem on college and university campuses; some figures estimate that up to half of college students will face food insecurities at some point while pursuing their degree. Under SB 767, institutions may be designated as “hunger-free” campuses and receive grant funding for programming if they: have a hunger task force, have a designated staff member to help eligible students enroll in the Maryland Food Supplement Program, hold hunger awareness activities, have a food pantry, have some form of a meal sharing/meal plan credit donation program, and conduct an annual survey on student hunger.

While MICUA member institutions are not eligible for this grant program, many of our campuses are already engaged in the activities described above and support initiatives that address student and community food insecurities. Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Launched in 2016, **Stevenson University** has a campus food pantry run by student coordinators and volunteers. It holds regular hours and is in a central location on campus proximate to other student services. It holds food drives, disseminates public service announcements, and has a Facebook page.
- **Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)** recently established a campus food pantry to serve its students, recognizing the importance of addressing food insecurities to promote both individual wellbeing and educational attainment. MICA also held a food drive in November as part of its annual campus-wide Unity Fest activities.
- The Frederick Food Security Network is a community gardening program through the **Hood College** Center for Coastal and Watershed Studies. It is establishing a network of community gardens to improve food security for residents of local food deserts, reduce local water pollution by diverting rooftop runoff for use as irrigation, and promote better eating habits and environmental stewardship.
- **Loyola University Maryland's** FreshCrate Program makes affordable and fresh produce available all year long in local stores along Baltimore's York Road corridor. It is part of the University's York Road Initiative, which focuses on strengthening the community in areas including education, food access, and commercial revitalization.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information related to Senate Bill 767 on behalf of our member institutions.

SB 767 Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program (Washingto

Uploaded by: Wilkins, Barbara

Position: INFO

LARRY HOGAN
Governor

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD
Lieutenant Governor



DAVID R. BRINKLEY
Secretary

MARC L. NICOLE
Deputy Secretary

SENATE BILL 767 Higher Education – Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Established (Washington)

STATEMENT OF INFORMATION

DATE: March 9, 2021

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs

SUMMARY OF BILL: SB 767 mandates an annual appropriation in the amount of \$150,000 to establish grants to higher education institutions and community colleges for the purpose of addressing student hunger. Some of the strategies include providing a food pantry, establishing a meal-sharing program (unused meal plan credits), and assisting students in accessing SNAP benefits. The colleges match the grant amount.

EXPLANATION: The Department of Budget and Management's focus is not on the underlying policy proposal being advanced by the legislation, but rather on the annual \$150,000 mandated appropriation.

DBM has the responsibility of submitting a balanced budget to the General Assembly annually, which requires spending allocations for FY 2022 to be within the official revenues estimates approved by the Board of Revenue Estimates in December 2020.

Economic conditions remain precarious as a result of COVID-19, making revenue predictions for the remainder of FY 2021 and FY 2022 highly volatile. Many individuals and households are unemployed or underemployed, with many industry sectors operating at much less than 100% capacity. Federal stimulus programs are providing much needed relief, but the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to present a significant budgetary vulnerability.

The General Assembly and Administration have successfully enacted the Governor's emergency Recovery for the Economy, Livelihoods, Industries, Entrepreneurs, and Families Act (SB 496 RELIEF Act), which provides \$1.1 billion in direct stimulus and tax relief for Maryland working families, small businesses, and those who have lost their jobs as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is incumbent upon us to allow the impact of this unprecedented relief package on the State's economy to take effect. Further mandated spending increases need to be reevaluated within the context of an ongoing pandemic.

**For additional information, contact Barbara Wilkins at
(410) 260-6371 or barbara.wilkins1@maryland.gov**

SB 767 Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant

Uploaded by: Yates, Anna

Position: INFO

**Senate Bill 767
Higher Education - Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program – Established
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
March 9, 2021**

Letter of Information

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on Senate Bill 767. This Bill establishes the Hunger-Free Campus Grant Program to address student hunger and basic food needs on campus. Components of this Bill include establishing a food pantry and developing a meal sharing program to allow students to donate unused meals from their meal plan to those in need. St. Mary's College seeks to promote the well-being of all students, regardless of their economic status. The College supports the goals of the Bill with respect to reducing hunger on campus.


We have concerns, however, with certain provisions of the Bill. First, the Bill's provisions for sharing unused meals is based on an incorrect assumption that unused meal credits result in substantial amounts of leftover food that could be shared with other students. At St. Mary's College, because we know from history that not all meal credits are used, we are able to buy only the amount of food that students are likely to consume. Consequently, never does the food service vendor purchase enough food to feed 100% of the meals students have purchased.

Meal plans build into their pricing that students do not eat 100% of the meals they could eat under their meal plan. By not buying food that would go unused, the College spends less on food, which is reflected in savings to the students and reduces food waste. Therefore, if the number of meals consumed increases significantly through a donated meal program, then the amount of food prepared will increase, as will the cost. The College would need to pass the cost to the students who do purchase meal plans; contrary to our efforts the last eight years to minimize the student cost of attendance.

Also, several years ago, the College restructured its meal plans in large part to eliminate the majority of unused meals. Approximately two-thirds of our students participate in an "unlimited" meal plan, which allows them to eat at our dining hall as many times a day as they want. Under these plans, there are no "unused" meals that could be donated, except for a limited amount of guest passes.

Finally, the Bill states that unused meals should be used to support a campus food pantry. Because the College does not have any "leftovers," or cost savings from unused meals, it would not be possible to implement this provision. The food pantry on campus collects non-perishable foods from members of the campus community.

Thank you for your continued support of St. Mary's College of Maryland.



Tuajuanda C. Jordan, PhD
President

