

Hugo E. Cantu (District 23B)

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF HB792, Sales and Use Tax - Tax-Free Periods - University and College Textbooks

Hearing Date: 2/11/2021

TO: Chair Kaiser and members of the House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Hugo E. Cantu

Hello everyone, Chair Kaiser and members of the Ways and Means Committee. For the record, my name is Hugo Cantu, and I am here as a private citizen to urge a **favorable** report on House Bill 792.

I want to thank Delegate Anderton for proposing this bill; I think this is an excellent use of sales tax exemption to provide everyday relief to Marylanders. As this body knows, I believe education is a path to financial prosperity for those that are the most financially vulnerable. The crushing financial burden currently placed on the middle and lower class for seeking a better education is one of the United States' most astounding failures of the 21st century. I believe Maryland, specifically House Members of Maryland, has proven they are willing to combat the many issues within the education system. With the veto override from members of the House on the Governor's veto of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, a powerful policy act underway to help Maryland's children.

I believe the support of HB792 will mirror the support of Kirwan. With the tax-exemption on university and college textbooks for just one week in August and one week in February, Marylander's will know that the state has their back. The one week may not sound like a lot of time. But I promise you when a single mother or a single father goes to buy a textbook or a tablet for their semester, the relief for those who need just a little bit more help will be overwhelming. The comfort of saving what some may consider "a few bucks" is a relief I wish my family had; the need for that relief is a necessity that I wish on no one.

As Kirwan continues its massive undertaking that will take months and years to flush out thoroughly, HB792 could provide day to day relief for just those few days. In those few days, single parents who are going back to school, young adults working and studying, and even grandparents who choose to help their grandkids pay for school, will feel the immediate relief of what HB792 can provide. The Ways and Means Committee have the unique privilege of supporting everyday relief, during a time when Marylander's need the help the most, with a favorable report on HB792.

I urge a **favorable** report.

Sincerely,
Hugo E. Cantu