

I am writing to you as a voter from District 30A. I am also the mother of two young adults with chronic health conditions. They are both graduates of the UMD and faced, for the most part, little support there in terms of their health issues.

As one example, my daughter suffered unpredictable symptomatic flares (headaches, fatigue, pain, fainting, etc.) that occasionally prevented her from attending class. The University offered meager accommodations so she was forced to "beg" her individual professors (unsuccessfully at times) for extensions or to attend class virtually (pre-COVID). She had to repeat one class and was forced to graduate later than planned. Clearly, the system as it stands, failed her.

As you may recall, last year your committee and ultimately the Legislature approved the "Task Force on Higher Education—Students with Chronic Health Conditions" to examine how well universities are tracking these students. The work group recommended, among other things, that each MD university have a case manager dedicated to students with chronic health conditions, many of whom feel "invisible."

My daughter is just one of the thousands of bright and promising students whose college experience could have benefited greatly from having a case manager to support and advocate for them. Student athletes at UMD are afforded dedicated counselors to ensure they graduate; it's time that students like my daughter are provided similar support.

I ask that you approve this bill so that future "young invisibles" are fully accommodated and included in their higher education.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Purdy, District 30A