MICUA Maryland Independent College and University Association

Support with Amendments

House Appropriations Committee
House Bill 598 (Solomon) Higher Education – Transfer Platform – Established
(Transfer with Success Act 2.0)

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On behalf of the member institutions of the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA) and the 58,000 students we serve, I thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in **support with amendments** of *House Bill 598 (Solomon) Higher Education - Transfer Platform - Established (Transfer With Success Act 2.0)*. This bill requires institutions of higher education in the State to participate in an articulation system established to facilitate the transfer of students from community colleges to four-year institutions. The bill also requires the Governor, beginning in fiscal year 2024, to appropriate $1 million annually to support the operation of the transfer platform. Institutions may not be charged a fee to participate. MICUA strongly supports this legislation and is appreciative to be included; however, **we respectfully request an amendment to authorize the MICUA institutions to opt in to the transfer platform, rather than being required to participate.**

In both the Fall of 2019 and the Fall of 2020, MICUA institutions welcomed to campus over 400 transfer students from almost every community college in Maryland – 13 different institutions in 2019 and 15 different institutions in 2020. MICUA continues to strengthen articulation agreements with community college partners and is working diligently to improve student transfer rates. In the last year, the number of Maryland community college articulation agreements among our institutions has increased to 189 and one of our schools has over 85 (and growing) articulation agreements in place.

Several of the MICUA institutions participate in ARTSYS, the current articulation system for Maryland colleges and universities, that is operated by the University System of Maryland (USM). A newly redesigned and functionally improved system is being developed and implemented by Quottly, a third-party vendor. For the MICUA institutions that do not participate in ARTSYS, factors for consideration include: the cost of the subscription fee; uniquely specific curriculum requirements; the fact that very few transfer students apply; pre-existing seamless transfer agreements with community colleges; or the inability to reconcile different data communication capabilities. Several of these factors are financial and will be resolved by this bill. While the MICUA institutions are grateful for this benefit to our schools, the **true benefit will be to the transfer students themselves, as they will ultimately have more options in seeking a baccalaureate degree in the State.**

In addition to participating in ARTSYS, MICUA institutions also support transfer students through our work on a planning grant from the Teagle and Arthur Vining Davis (AVD) Foundations to explore and improve transfer pathways to the liberal arts at private nonprofit institutions of higher education. Ten of the MICUA member institutions have partnered with all 16 community colleges in the State to design a comprehensive transfer consortium whose structure will ensure: ongoing communication about transfer-related concerns and solutions; systematic data collection, sharing, and dissemination to drive sustained, data-infused change; and the use of data to improve the transfer student experience and promote positive student success outcomes. Four workgroups – Simplicity, Success, Scholarly Pathways, and Security – have been formed, and their membership includes faculty and staff from the member institutions of both MICUA and the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC). The charge of the workgroups is to ensure a seamless transition from community college to one of the participating MICUA institutions.

Below please find an amendment that will authorize the MICUA institutions to opt in to the transfer platform rather than being required to participate.

We appreciate Delegate Solomon's commitment to making the transfer process as smooth as possible. An effective transfer platform will enable students to make informed decisions about their transfer options and help them find the academic program and institution most closely aligned with their goals. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact Angela Sherman, Vice President for Academic Affairs, asherman@micua.org.

 For all of these reasons, MICUA requests a favorable with amendments report for House Bill 598.

Amendments Proposed to House Bill 598 *Transfer with Success Act 2.0*
By: MICUA

(G)   (1)   **(I)**   EACH COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND **PUBLIC** 4-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE SHALL PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION.

(II)   A PRIVATE NONPROFIT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION.

(2)   (SAME)

(3)   (SAME)

(4)   EACH 4-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION **THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM** SHALL:

(I) – (IV)   (SAME)

(5)   EACH RECEIVING INSTITUTION **THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM** SHALL REVIEW ALL COURSE EVALUATIONS SUBMITTED IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM BY A SENDING INSTITUTION AND PROVIDE DECISIONS TO THE SENDING INSTITUTION IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM.

(6)   (SAME)

On page 3, in line 5, after "(1)" insert "(I)"; in the same line, after "AND" insert "PUBLIC"; in line 6, strike "THAT RECEIVES STATE FUNDS"; after line 7, insert:

"(II)   A PRIVATE NONPROFIT INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM ESTABLISHED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SUBSECTION.";

and in line 26, after "EDUCATION" insert "THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM".

On page 5, in line 10, after "INSTITUTION" insert "THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE TRANSFER PLATFORM".