



January 28, 2022

Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Mark S. Chang, Vice-Chair
House Office Building, Room 121
6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support for House Bill 255
Stance: Support

Madam Chairman, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Planit Advertising, Inc., thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill 255, which expands the Maryland Technology Internship Program (MTIP) scholarship opportunities and creates the Maryland Internship Opportunities Program (MIOP). We need direct pathways to recruit student interns and remain innovative in our ever-changing industry.

Planit is a small-to-medium size full service digital advertising agency. Planit was founded 27 years ago by local Baltimoreans. We do a lot of work in the community, and maintain a balance of clients both locally and nationally. In order to thrive and continue to give back to our community, we need the most innovative and diverse group of students possible. The MIOP would unlock access and the potential of our local talent pool.

Our industry has a growing need for students with non-technical majors such as public policy, psychology and the arts. We regularly hire designers, writers, strategists and public relations employees. In the past, the MTIP grant has supported more technical roles and enabled us to hire students who would otherwise be unable to take an unpaid internship, and we've been able to spread our internship support dollars further internally to increase the number and quality of paid internships. We want to do the same for non-technically-focused opportunities.

We also wholeheartedly agree with our local HBCUs and networks that we must pay our interns to ensure opportunities are attainable for all students. While we work to strengthen our relationships, the funding support must also be available to ensure we can offer as many paid internships as possible, and to continue to balance internal pressures to maintain a high-quality learning experience.

We want to continue providing a meaningful and top-notch program for Planit interns, to both improve their learning through real experience and to encourage the chances of them staying in Baltimore and improving our community's future. These students are truly the next generation of innovators. UMBC has been a phenomenal partner to date, and under UMBC's leadership, this new program for humanities-based businesses will offer more internship options to students who want to launch their life in Maryland after graduation. Please support HB255.

Sincerely,

Holly Schmittle
Director of Human Resources

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