

HOUSE BILL 648

SUPPORT FOR APPROVAL

Date February 15, 2021

I am writing on the behalf the First Generation College Bound and a member and Chair of Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity for the passage and increase funding of House Bill 648 Higher Education Outreach and College Access Program submitted by Delegate Alonzo Washington. FGCB and members of Maryland Alliance recognize the need for Outreach and College Access due to years of providing services to students, especially students of poverty with limited resources in schools and communities. The need for outreach and college access was confirmed in the initial Maryland Higher Education Grant Outreach and College Access report. First Generation College Bound, Collegiate Directions, College Bound Foundation, CASA de Maryland and ACES of Montgomery County were the first nonprofits awarded. The programs impacted 1,585 students and parents in the college bound process especially FAFSA completion to be eligible for Federal and Maryland State Financial Aid. Due to completing of the Financial Aid process low-income students were eligible for one of the following Financial Aid Awards for the Maryland Higher Education Commission: the Howard P Rawlings, Guaranteed Access Grant, Education Assistance Grant, Promise Scholarships and Legislative Scholarships. The award enable them to attend an affordable Maryland State College. However, it is important to note outreach support help establish a relationship with the students and their parents gaining their trust to complete the college bound process, especially financial aid. Students from low income families have the greatest need for outreach and college access as the FGCB Class of 2021 receive \$2.8 to attend an affordable college due to the outreach and support received. See Attached FGCB Alumni Data confirming college affordability as Maryland State College rank in the top 10.

Passage of HB 648 Outreach and College Access will strengthen the Maryland High Education infrastructure as it partners with Community Base Organization to

provide college bound support to students from low income families state wide for college success. Recognizing this need for more than 30 years First Generation College Bound being a member of Maryland Alliance for College Affordability and Equity supports passage of HB 648 Higher Education Outreach and College Access Program.

Joseph Fisher

CEO & Founder

First Generation College Bound