



DIVISION OF
STUDENT AFFAIRS

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RE: Testimony in Support of SB0523 or HB0533

To: Chair C.T. Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee

Dear Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing to you with expert testimony as to how impactful the HB0533 bill proposals are for the economic growth for the state of Maryland. As the Coordinator of Immigrant and Undocumented Student Life at the University of Maryland, I have the first-hand privilege of assisting Maryland undocumented students with their educational and career goals. Many of the students that I advise have benefited from programs such as the Maryland Dream Act and are pursuing various educational programs and majors at the University of Maryland. As they approach their senior years, these students are invested in pursuing graduate education and career prospects within the state of Maryland. Unlike most of their peers, these students have prohibitions of obtaining professional licenses as a result of their immigration status. Licenses such as but not limited to: Nursing, Psychology, Medical licenses, Architecture, Teaching certifications, and Certified Public Accountants are restricted to undocumented individuals. All of these applications for licensure require a Social Security Number. However this requirement could be changed to require an ITIN number instead for licensing. These restrictions also impact future professionals that will need official certification or a license to practice and open a business in Maryland. At the community college level this also affects students studying for cosmetology, certified nursing assistants, and as barbers.

Recently, I worked with students at the University of Maryland who are majoring in accounting, architecture, and counseling psychology. Undocumented students would like to continue to obtain their licenses upon graduation. Not having licensure ability will most likely force these students and future professionals to relocate to other states that allow individuals without a social security number to get professional licenses. I believe that this will diminish our exceptional workforce that originates in Maryland and is counterproductive to the efforts of the State of Maryland already provides undocumented students. Maryland invests to help undocumented students with their educational journey with the MD Dream Act, MSFAA, and College Promise programs. Our students would like to continue to reside and work in their home state of Maryland. They would contribute to the state's economy and community of engaged leaders if they were given the opportunity to secure licensure opportunities.

In order to successfully make the most out of all of our University of Maryland students' education and economic contributions in their home state of Maryland, this matter must be reconsidered to favor undocumented individuals in need of obtaining professional licences to further their career and financial options for employment. The Maryland Dream Act has provided the first step into a student's educational career journey, and the HB0533 bills will provide the necessary action to transition students from college into their professional careers. This will help to transform the Maryland economy positively.

Best regards,

Rocio Fregoso-Mota

Coordinator for Immigrant and Undocumented Student Life at the University of Maryland