

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB523/HB533

February 10, 2022

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

My name is Christian Huaman, I am a resident of the state of Maryland for the past 12 years and I am currently a Master of Science in Accounting student at Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland, College Park.

SB0523 and HB 0533 present Maryland with a win-win situation. The reasons why I strongly support the bills are as follows:

- **The bills allow immigrants to fill job demands.** In this post-COVID world, Maryland continues to struggle with a shortage of workers. Many small businesses and companies have been closing, which increases their reliance on the state for financial support. It is time for Maryland to show and propagate the idea that we are truly open for business.
- **The bills allow Maryland to benefit from its investment in education.** For years, Maryland has smartly invested in the education of all students, including undocumented students, in public schools and higher learning institutions. Granting professional licenses would allow these students to contribute to the state's economy and for Maryland to reap the benefits of these long-term investments.
- **The bills allow for retention of skilled, educated workers in Maryland.** After graduation, Maryland-educated undocumented students are opting to move to progressive states where they can obtain their licenses. This includes the states of Arkansas, California, Florida, Nevada, New York, among many others.

As an undocumented student at a higher learning institution, I know the countless barriers that prevent Dreamers from going to college, paying the high costs of tuition, finding a job after graduation, among many others. Regardless of this, I finished at the top 20% of my class in one of the most prestigious business schools in the country. I received multiple offers from the Big Four Accounting firms but had to reject them because of my legal status. I enrolled myself in graduate school in hopes that I will soon be able to obtain my CPA license. Like myself, there are many undocumented students who are ready to contribute to the prosperity of Maryland. After 2020 and 2021, no one has earned the right to have an occupational or professional certifications more than those in the medical fields. Even though I would not benefit from these bills directly, it is time for Marylanders to take steps towards a more inclusive and economically strong state.

Sincerely,

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