

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**SENATE BILL 620 – HIGHER EDUCATION –
ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS AND TRANSFER PROCEDURES – WORKGROUP STUDY
(MARYLAND ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER ACT)**

Sponsor – Senator Cassilly

March 8, 2022

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support

Senate Bill 620 creates a Workgroup on Articulation Agreements and Transfer Procedures of Institutions of Higher Education in the State to study obstacles encountered by students transferring between community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education in the State. The workgroup would study the current system of articulation agreements and transfer procedures and make recommendations to remedy any obstacles identified. The workgroup would be required to submit a report with its findings on or before January 1, 2023.

There are a number of articulation agreements between Maryland community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education. The resulting labyrinth makes it difficult for students to make decisions about what courses to take in hopes that the credits will transfer to another institution.

As more courses have moved online, and students are delaying their enrollment in a four-year university, the need for students and advisors to clearly understand how their courses will transfer to other schools has increased. Both Montana and Idaho have adopted platforms that streamline the transfer process and allow students to access to an individual dashboard for tracking their progress towards a credential or degree, which benefits students, institutions, and future employers. The workgroup proposed in Senate Bill 620 will have the opportunity to investigate potential improvements, such as a transfer platform, that would remove obstacles for students.

Creating and nurturing a strong workforce is one of the Greater Baltimore Committee's most important priorities. Without a strong workforce, Maryland's economy cannot innovate, grow, and create jobs. The GBC's Preparing for the Future: A Regional Workforce Development Initiative was created to ensure that the region's high-growth industries have a pipeline of highly skilled workers who can contribute to future economic growth. In 2020 the initiative released a report outlining recommendations to meet the future workforce needs. Since the report's issuance, the GBC has regularly convened a diverse network of stakeholders to assist in the implementation of the recommendations.

A number of the recommendations in the Preparing for the Future report involve increased coordination among those providing training for various credentials for family-supporting wage jobs. Efforts to make the transfer process more transparent with fewer obstacles will be a valuable tool for students, educational institutions, and future employers.

In addition to its alignment with the GBC Preparing for the Future Report, Senate Bill 620 is consistent with one of the core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth in the GBC report *Gaining a Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, specifically:

Workforce that is highly-educated and meets Maryland's business needs. Maryland's secondary and higher education institutions must offer access to quality instruction at all levels and cultivate a workforce that is well-suited to a modern economy and to the specific needs of Maryland's business sectors.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report on Senate Bill 620.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 67-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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