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SB 832: Public Institutions of Higher Education - Students with Chronic Health Conditions - Case Manager  
Senate Education Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
March 2, 2022  
Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and we support SB 832. Sb 832 promotes inclusion and accountability, and is a critical step to ensure equitable access to higher education for individuals with disabilities.

There are a number of resources on college campuses in Maryland that could be helpful and necessary for the success of students with chronic health conditions but often students are either unaware of the service or face disability-related barriers to accessing the service. This bill would require each institute of higher education in Maryland to provide case management services to students with chronic health conditions to support students to utilize existing resources. Case managers would help students with chronic conditions by serving as a liaison or ombudsman of sorts: coordinating services between different departments, providing information to students and help to access supports and services, collect data and information on programs, services, needs, and outcomes, and support other efforts across campus and community systems to reduce barriers that impede a student's academic success.

**Students with intellectual and developmental disabilities have the lowest rates of both competitive employment and college enrollment compared to all other disability groups. Yet, students with intellectual disabilities who complete an inclusive postsecondary program achieve better employment outcomes, expand peer and social networks and increase independence.<sup>i</sup>**

The 2021 Maryland Higher Education Commission report on Students with Disabilities notes, "In fiscal year 2019, 15,814 undergraduate students and 1,417 graduate students were registered with their institutions' disability services office as students with disabilities.<sup>ii</sup> While this is a large number, it admittedly does not capture all students who have disabilities not registered with the institution of higher learning who have not self-disclosed a disability or asked for learning accommodations.

In high school, although children with chronic illness have greater numbers of days absent from school than their healthy peers, the vast majority are able to graduate.<sup>iii</sup> **Despite having similar high school graduation rates, research indicates that young adults with chronic illness are only half as likely to graduate from college as their healthy peers.<sup>iv</sup>** Disruptions in peer relationships, isolation, loneliness, and loss of supports (formerly available in high school) are contributing factors.<sup>v</sup>

While the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act provides for education-related services and supports for children with disabilities, ages birth to 21, it does not provide supports people with disabilities needed for academic success in college, such as education coaches, assistive technology, tutors, or other supports required to learn, socialize and engage with others, and exercise independence.



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We understand that several Maryland campuses offer some form of case-management services to students with Chronic Health Conditions, but the effort is not consistent across the state, and services vary from institution to institution.

The state invests significant primary and secondary school resources for young students with disabilities to prepare them for adult work or continuing education life. Some students with IDD are able to access Developmental Disabilities Administration services as a Transitioning Youth, but students with chronic health conditions who elect to go on to college may not qualify for DDA services and supports. These young people experience an abrupt cliff upon exit from high school. What many need, however, is continuing support through the college years so they may be successful in college, graduate, and ultimately contribute to the workforce.

Students with disabilities who attend college with the services and supports necessary not only acquire valuable knowledge and skills but learn independence. Providing case management for students with disabilities and chronic health conditions would take us another step toward increasing equitable access and opportunity to college experiences for all.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://education.umd.edu/news/12-21-20-maryland-developmental-disabilities-council-funds-terps-exceed-inclusive-postsecondary>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://mhec.maryland.gov/publications/Documents/Research/AnnualReports/2021ReportonStudentswithDisabilities.pdf>

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640\\_College\\_Freshmen\\_with\\_Chronic\\_Illness\\_A\\_Comparison\\_With\\_Healthy\\_First-Year\\_Students](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640_College_Freshmen_with_Chronic_Illness_A_Comparison_With_Healthy_First-Year_Students)

<sup>iv</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640\\_College\\_Freshmen\\_with\\_Chronic\\_Illness\\_A\\_Comparison\\_With\\_Healthy\\_First-Year\\_Students](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640_College_Freshmen_with_Chronic_Illness_A_Comparison_With_Healthy_First-Year_Students)- reference National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health 2014

<sup>v</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640\\_College\\_Freshmen\\_with\\_Chronic\\_Illness\\_A\\_Comparison\\_With\\_Healthy\\_First-Year\\_Students](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265924640_College_Freshmen_with_Chronic_Illness_A_Comparison_With_Healthy_First-Year_Students)