

February 9, 2022

**Committees:** Environment and Transportation & Economic Matters

**Testimony on:** SB0152 – Transcripts Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debts

**Position:** Favorable

RE: Testimony in support of SB0152

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

The University of Maryland – College Park, Student Government Association supports SB0152 that prohibits punitive measures by higher education institutions, specifically refusing transcript requests from students who owe debts to the institution. SB0152 will:

- Provide equal access to individuals facing difficult financial circumstances
- Enable equal opportunity for all members of a higher education institution
- Prevent higher education institutions from employing less favorable treatment to students in-debt

I support this bill because every student, present or past, deserves the right to their official transcript. Transcripts are often required as part of the application process for jobs and post-graduate programs. These programs are often a necessary next step for students to earn the money they need to pay off student loans and begin their professional careers. By holding student transcripts hostage from current students and alumni who owe a debt to the university, you are preventing those students from being able to quickly and comfortably pay back the money that they owe.

As a student applying for entry-level jobs and post-graduate programs, I have recently experienced how important it is to have the ability to send your official transcript to prospective employers. Without the ability to send my official transcript, or without the financial means to pay the fees required to send the official documentation, particularly at a higher price, it would have been nearly impossible to find a next step for myself following graduation this spring. The role of higher-education institutions is to provide students with the tools they need to successfully pursue a career. By withholding official transcripts from students and alumni, these institutions are actively harming the professional growth of those they are meant to help. They are directly preventing the debt from being repaid in a way that is safe for the students they were built to aid.

We the students of University of Maryland, College Park request a favorable vote on HB307.

Sincerely,

*Kislay Parashar*

*Student Body President of University of Maryland, College Park*

*kislay.parashar2000@gmail.com*