

SENATOR SARAH ELFRETH
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Education, Business and Administration

Chair, Pensions

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

Joint Committee on the Chesapeake and
Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Area



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 103
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3578 · 301-858-3578
800-492-7122 Ext. 3578
Fax 410-841-3156 · 301-858-3156
Sarah.Elfreth@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 2, 2020

Testimony in Favor of SB540
Higher Education - Transfer Platform - Established (Transfer with Success Act 2.0)

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

I respectfully request a favorable report of SB540 to take an additional step forward in the effort to make the transfer process from Maryland community colleges to four-year institutions clear, streamlined, and seamless.

The pathway from community college to a four-year university remains a key pillar of expanding educational opportunities – such a path allows students to begin their post-secondary education at more affordable and accommodating colleges and then transfer to four-year institutions when they are ready to take that step forward after covering courses that typically include general requirements.

Yet, too many students continue to lose credits through this transfer process - costing the student additional tuition and time. The good news is that this Committee has already taken much-needed action on this important matter through the passage of Senate Bill 886, the Transfer With Success Act, last session which added transparency and accountability for the transfer process by requiring better notification to schools when transfer credits are rejected so there can be better advising and planning.

SB540 represents the next step in this critical endeavor. Our community colleges and four-year institutions have been hard at work building the ARTSYS - the Articulation System for Maryland's colleges and universities - a one-stop online platform that allows community college students to cross-check their coursework with the requirements of programs across Maryland's four-year universities. Currently 35 institutions, including all the two-year and four-year public institutions, and the MICUA institutions currently have the option to participate.

After conversations with MACC, USM, and MICUA – I will be offering a sponsor amendment on SB540 to clarify the program.

This legislation, as amended, builds on last year's legislation to further support our students who are transferring from community colleges to four-year institutions by:

1. Requiring the creation of a transfer platform to facilitate the transfer of students from community colleges to public four-year institutions through the University System of Maryland (ARTSYS)
2. Authorizing private non-public institutions to opt-in to the program
3. Clarifying what institutions need put into the transfer platform including: the ability for students to establish accounts; allowing access to saved searches; providing transfer programs for near-completers; providing reverse transfer accountability for students; providing admissions requirements for institutions; and, the ability to compare courses which students seek to transfer.
4. Requiring an appropriation of \$1M for the creation and maintenance of this platform.

Once again I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 540 to ensure that our students who choose to attend community colleges have the support they need to effectively transfer to four-year institutions.