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Dear Chairwoman/Chairman,

The University of Maryland recommends an amendment to the operator definition of Senate Bill 325, to exempt the providers of nationally recognized high school exams that are used for college entrance or placement, college credit, or scholarship opportunities.

If not amended, Senate Bill 325 will significantly limit a student's ability to access critical programming and information from institutions of higher education that will help them earn a degree, particularly historically underrepresented student populations who are already disproportionately less likely to apply, enroll, and graduate from college.

When students take the SAT, they can opt-into Student Search Service which connects thousands of colleges and scholarships with more than 5 million students. Students contacted by colleges through Student Search are, on average, 25% more likely to enroll in a 4-year college and 31% more likely to graduate on time from a 4-year college.

At the University of Maryland, many of the students that we are able to access through this program are provided with services they may not otherwise have. They are not only educated about the university, they are provided important information about the college application process, they are educated about applying for financial aid, they learn about scholarship opportunities, and they are encouraged to pursue opportunities they may otherwise feel are out of their reach.

Overall, students are 23% more likely to apply to a 4-year college when they receive information through Student Search Service than when they do not. Students are also 25% more likely to enroll in a 4-year college and 31% more likely to graduate. These gains are even greater for under-represented populations. For example, Black students are 25% more likely to enroll in a 4-year college and 40% more likely to complete their college degree when they receive outreach through Search programs.

Amending the definition of operator will ensure that students who choose to can opt in to share their data and receive information from higher education institutions like ours, as well as information about scholarship opportunities. Protecting students' data has always been and continues to be one of our top priorities, and we want to make sure students have access to all the opportunities available to them while protecting their privacy. Programs like Student Search Service allow families the choice to sign up and opt out at any time. We are required to adhere to strict guidelines to ensure student data remains private and used only for educational purposes.

We believe all students deserve the same opportunity to access information that can support their transition to college. This amendment will continue providing students with opportunities to they may not otherwise receive without it. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely

Shannon Gundy  
Assistant Vice President