



TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF  
HOUSE BILL 546  
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 21, 2023  
MARYLAND NONPROFITS

Contact: Neil Bergsman, Senior Policy Analyst  
[nbergsman@mdnonprofit.org](mailto:nbergsman@mdnonprofit.org) 667-335-0401

**Maryland Nonprofits supports House Bill 546 to launch a statewide optional service initiative for high school graduates.**

This program will promote a norm of service to the community for young people and citizens of all ages.

It will help provide a source of critically needed workforce assistance for participating nonprofits. We expect that many participants will be motivated to continue their involvement with nonprofit organizations after completing the programs, as professional workers, leaders, or supporters.

It will help to narrow the opportunity gap for young people from disadvantaged communities.

For these reasons, **Maryland Nonprofits respectfully requests a FAVORABLE report on HB 546.**

Maryland Nonprofits is eager to collaborate with the Department of Service and Civic Engagement to identify, recruit, and facilitate nonprofit organizations to be participating employers and to help promote the program.

We recommend that the Department interpret the program's areas of focus - education, health, and the environment - broadly to include such nonprofit missions as early childhood education, youth programs and recreation, the arts and museums, services to aging Marylanders and to Marylanders with disabilities, substance abuse treatment and recovery, and animal welfare.

Maryland Nonprofits is the statewide network of all nonprofits, with more than 1,700 member organizations across the state. Nonprofit organizations employ 12.9% of the state's private sector workforce – more than any other sector except retail.