

# ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## House Appropriations Committee

### TESTIMONY

Submitted by  
Conor Curran, Student Trustee  
Anne Arundel Community College Board of Trustees

February 24, 2023

### **BILL: HB 923 – Higher Education – Appointment of Secretary and Student Financial Assistance – Alterations**

#### **POSTION: Favorable**

I'm writing to urge your support for HB 923. The Maryland Promise Scholarship currently allows full-time students to receive a \$5,000 scholarship. This legislation will allow part-time students, who make up over 77% of our student population at Anne Arundel Community College eligible for this state aid. At AACC we are always striving to open opportunities for folks to continue their higher-education journey. This legislation would open many opportunities for students across our campus. Many students have jobs outside of their studies and this legislation will allow them to spend more time on their coursework by giving them this financial opportunity. The Maryland Promise is about expanding opportunities for Marylanders, we should be expanding opportunities for every student, not just the students who have the time to take 12 credits per semester.

Currently, the Maryland Promise Scholarship is distributed by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. This has led to students being redirected to another agency for aid, which can be confusing and demotivating. The average student at AACC is a 26-year-old female part-student. The average student has their life to live. Many students have a family to provide for. Students already face many challenges and receiving financial aid should not be one of them. This legislation would allow Community Colleges to distribute those funds through their perspective financial aid office. A decentralized program will streamline the process of students getting the aid they need to complete the classes that bring them one step closer to their goal. We must break down barriers for young people, and the access to this scholarship can provide can change lives.

Community Colleges already manage federal and other state aid. It is vital that financial aid is in one place so they can get a quick response. This would also allow us to align deadline with our academic calendars that makes sense to our students. I know students who don't receive the aid they needed because of these barriers.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill and your proven commitment to expanding educational opportunities for students of all ages in Maryland.