

**SB297\_MACC\_FAV\_B Phillips.pdf**

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Position: FAV

**Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

**Testimony by Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director**

**February 8, 2023**

**SB 297 - Community College – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment**

**POSITION: Support**

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On behalf of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, we offer our support for this legislation and thank Senator McKay for sponsoring this bill. This legislation will align statute for community colleges that is already in statute for libraries and public schools by offering the same adjustment in State and local match formulas.

The General Assembly passed the Build to Learn Act during the 2020 Legislative Session, which enabled certain counties to use the match rate for neighboring jurisdictions for capital projects and last year, HB 1249 allowed for libraries to benefit from the same adjustment. This bill also uses the same language that provides for a State share adjustment to be applied to community colleges as well.

Even though the legislation is Statewide, the community college that will most likely benefit from the adjustment is Garrett College. Garrett County still has a 50-50 match rate for community colleges. Garrett County is a rural county with a median household income that is below the bottom quartile of the State. At issue is the wealth generated by vacation homes around Deep Creek Lake, which distorts the current State matching formula for the community college.

By aligning the State share for community colleges with what is already permissible for public schools and libraries will help Garret College provide the state-of-the art facilities needed to grow the region's economy and increase the higher education attainment rate.

MACC requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 297.

# **SB 297 Testimony**

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

**MIKE MCKAY**  
*Legislative District 1*  
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



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Judicial Proceedings Committee  
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**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

Senate Bill 297 – Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment

February 6, 2023

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chairman Rosapepe, and members of the committee,

The purpose of this bill is to relieve some of the financial burden that some of our smaller counties, particularly the county I represent of Garrett County regarding their capital projects for the community colleges. Currently, Garrett County shares a split of 50/50 with the state government when capital projects are undertaken. This creates a financial strain as Garrett County is the poorest and smallest jurisdiction. As such this bill changes the financial split from 50/50 to 89/11 in line with neighboring Allegany County. I ask for a favorable consideration on Senate Bill 297.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Senator Mike McKay

Representing the Appalachian Region of Maryland

Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

**SB297\_GarrettCollege\_D.Morin.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Richard Midcap

Position: FAV

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 297  
Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment**

**Mr. Don Morin, Board of Trustees Chair  
Garrett College  
February 8, 2023**

The Garrett College Board of Trustees unanimously and enthusiastically supports Senate Bill 297. This bill, introduced at the Board's request by Senator McKay, would provide an adjustment to the state share of community college capital projects for counties in the bottom quartile of median household income. It would reduce by as much as two-fifths the local share for future Garrett College capital projects. This would have a profound effect on our ability to continue renovating our main campus buildings, many of which are now 40 to 50 years old and in dire need of renovation.

I'd like to emphasize that the Garrett County Commissioners are strong supporters and generous funders of Garrett College. The College – despite being located in the least populated county in the state – has received regular local operating budget increases, and has a fully funded Promise Program for recent high school graduates, dually-enrolled high school students, and students in credentialed workforce training programs. The Commissioners have in the last five years also provided the 50% match for a new STEM Center as well as \$4 million toward a community performing arts center that recently opened on our campus.

The Commissioners informed us last summer that they cannot commit for the foreseeable future to a 50% match on upcoming capital projects. SB297 provides a path forward to funding our next project – a partial renovation of our student center that would permit replacement of a 41-year-old cafeteria. Even after cutting in half the scope of that project, we simply cannot fully fund the local share. Our county can contribute \$1.25 million, and the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to match that \$1.25 out of the College fund balance. SB297 would allow Garrett College to use the same state/local split as bordering Allegany County, creating a 70/30 ratio that would turn \$5 million in available funding into \$8.5 million. That would make all the difference in our ability to fund the partial student center renovation and future capital projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this bill. I encourage this committee to support SB297.

**SB297\_GarrettCollege\_R.Midcap.pdf**

Uploaded by: Richard Midcap

Position: FAV

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 297  
Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment**

**Dr. Richard Midcap, President  
Garrett College  
February 8, 2023**

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) oversees the Community College Construction Grant Program (CCCGP). The state share complies with the cost-sharing provisions in Title 11-105 (j) of the Education Article, Annotated Code of Maryland. Based on that formula, the State contributes between 50 and 75% of each capital project, with the home county (or counties) responsible for the remainder of the funding.

Senate Bill 297 would amend 11-105 (j) to provide an adjustment to the formula for counties in the bottom quartile of median household income that currently receive 50% state funding for community college capital projects. The local share would be reduced to equal the local share of the adjacent county that is less than 50% but closest to 50%.

While “Garrett College” is found nowhere within SB297’s language, I freely admit that I strongly support this bill because of the dramatic impact it would have on our ability to undertake capital projects at my college. The 50% local share currently required for Garrett College projects is an extremely heavy lift for Garrett County. We are – by far – the smallest jurisdiction in the state with a single county supporting a community college. As a frame of reference, Garrett County has about 29,000 residents. The next-smallest counties supporting community colleges are Allegany County (approximately 71,000 residents) and Cecil County (approximately 100,000 residents).

The change, if implemented for projects starting in Fiscal Year 2025, would permit Garrett County to obtain the same 70% state share as neighboring Allegany County. Such a change would significantly improve our prospects for future capital projects. If this adjustment is approved, the local share on a \$10 million capital project at Garrett College would drop from \$5 million to \$3 million. For my college, this bill could be the difference between moving forward or delaying our next capital project – a much-needed renovation of our cafeteria and related spaces in our student center.

I’m pleased to say our request has overwhelming support. The Maryland Association of Community Colleges’ Council of Presidents voted last August to unanimously support this bill. The Garrett County Commissioners and the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce are also formally supporting SB297.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony. I hope after careful consideration this committee will endorse SB297.



**SB 297 testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Will Wrobleski

Position: FAV



**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Written Testimony Supporting Senate Bill 297  
Community Colleges – Capital Projects – State Share Adjustment**

**Mr. William T. Wroblewski, President  
Garrett County Chamber of Commerce  
February 8, 2023**

The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce has a keen understanding of the importance an educated workforce plays in a community's economic health. Garrett College – through both its credit programs and non-credit workforce training leading to industry-recognized credentials – plays a critical role in providing our residents with access to quality educational opportunities. The College is able to fulfill its mission, first and foremost, by attracting and retaining highly qualified faculty and support staff. Its ability to develop and maintain appropriate facilities is also critically important for Garrett College to meet its educational mission. For that reason, the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce strongly supports Senate Bill 297, which would favorably adjust the state and local funding ratio for Garrett College capital projects.

Garrett College's facilities are impressive and well-maintained. That said, many of the buildings on the College's main campus in McHenry were originally built in the 1970s and '80s. The College's 2022-31 Facilities Master Plan is focused on three potential major renovations to key buildings that house academic spaces and student support facilities. Both the College administration and the County Commissioners have stated those future projects will be extremely challenging to fund if Garrett County remains responsible for half of the cost. SB 297 could reduce the local share to as little as 30%, which would make implementation of the FY2022-31 Facilities Master Plan much more achievable.

This bill, if passed and signed into law, would be a "game-changer" in the College's ability to provide 21<sup>st</sup>-century facilities for 21<sup>st</sup>-century students. We urge the committee to vote in favor of SB 297.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for this legislation.

