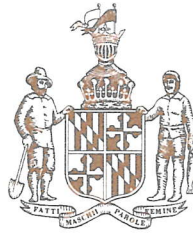


NANCY J. KING
Legislative District 39
Montgomery County

Majority Leader

Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 376 – Higher Education – MPowering Joint Steering Council - Funding

March 26, 2024

Mister Chairman and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

During the summer of 2021, Montgomery County, the University System of Maryland (USM) and Montgomery College signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to create the “Montgomery/Maryland Life Sciences Education and Innovation Partnership” to facilitate collaboration among industry and the academic partners on cutting-edge research.

Establishing a physical presence of world-class, postgraduate research programming has been central to this commitment. The proposed center of excellence will provide the opportunity for co-location, collaboration, and synergy among industry, academia, Federal and nonprofit research organizations within Montgomery County and the State of Maryland.

Towards the end of 2022, UMB and UMCP, in partnership with the University of Maryland Medical System, Montgomery County, Md., and collaborators at the Universities at Shady Grove and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, announced a transformative new medical research and academic institute that will use artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality, and other emerging technologies to improve healthcare in Maryland.

The University of Maryland Institute for Health Computing is the latest strategic initiative of MPower, which brings together the complementary strengths of UMB and UMCP to strengthen Maryland’s innovation economy, promote interdisciplinary research, and create more educational opportunities for students.

The funding proposed by Senate Bill 376 will allow for additional, permanent resources to support the Institute as it scales up to increase the volume of research conducted and to secure extramural funding, as well as to support other economic impact initiatives including job creation, company formation, and private investment.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 376.