



NOTRE DAME  
OF MARYLAND  
UNIVERSITY

**Senate Budget & Taxation & House Appropriations Committees**  
**HB75/SB377 – Higher Education - Teacher Development and Retention Program –**  
**Definition**  
*January 23, 2024*  
**Favorable with Amendments**

On behalf of Notre Dame of Maryland University (NDMU) and the nearly 2,000 students that we serve, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in **support** of [HB75/SB377 – Higher Education - Teacher Development and Retention Program – Definition](#). The bill expands the definition of an “institution of initial eligibility” to include community colleges as eligible institutions as part of the criteria for the Teacher Development and Retention Program (“the Program”).

NDMU is a private, Catholic university established in 1895 in Baltimore City with the mission to build inclusive communities and educate leaders to transform the world. NDMU offers a wide variety of full- and part-time undergraduate, graduate, doctoral, and certificate programs for women and men. The University enrolls approximately 2,000 students and has Schools of Arts, Sciences, and Business; Education; Nursing; and Pharmacy. **NDMU’s School of Education is the largest private provider of new teacher certifications in the State.**

NDMU is grateful for its strong long-running partnerships with the State, counties, and LEAs to prepare the next generation of Maryland’s teachers. As you may know, Notre Dame serves a unique and diverse population of students. In the traditional undergraduate college, 89% of our students are Maryland residents and 51% are individuals of a minority ethnic background. Many of these students are first generation (24%), and 50% are Pell Grant eligible and rely on a combination of federal, state, and institutional financial aid to support their educational pursuits. In 2023, U.S. News and World Report ranked NDMU #18 on the Top Performers in Social Mobility, making it #1 among Maryland institutions.

Under the [Maryland Educator Shortage Reduction Act of 2023](#) (HB1219, 2023), in order to be an “institution of initial eligibility” for the Program, the percentage of Pell grant undergraduate students has to be at least 40%. This resulted in a very limited number of institutions being able to participate in the Program and hence this bill. While NDMU supports expanding the definition to include Maryland’s public, two-year institutions, **NDMU recommends the Committee also consider lowering the Pell Grant percentage to “35%”**. Institutions, like NDMU, with high percentages of Pell Grant students in their traditional undergraduate program (the focus of the Program) were just barely not able to make the eligibility threshold due to the inclusion of adult undergraduate students, the vast majority of whom are already working and thus likely not Pell eligible, in the eligibility calculation. **There are currently no private colleges or universities in Greater Baltimore able to participate in the Program.**

For these reasons, NDMU supports HB75/SB377 with amendment. We would be pleased to

work with the bill sponsor and other stakeholders on further expanding this valuable program. We thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions or we can provide further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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