

UMBC Student Government Association
Senate and Executive Board



BILL: Senate Bill 567 - Public Institutions of Higher Education - Student Withdrawal Policy - Reimbursement of Tuition and Fees (Cameron Carden Act of 2024)

COMMITTEE: Appropriations Committee

DATE: March 20, 2024

POSITION: FAVORABLE

CONTACT: Jaden Farris - jfarris1@umbc.edu

Honorable Committee Members:

On behalf of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Student Government Association (UMBC SGA), I offer this testimony in support of the Cameron Carden Act of 2024, which requires University System of Maryland(USM) institutions to adopt policies for tuition and fee reimbursement under extenuating circumstances.

Student mental and physical health is paramount to academic success. No student should face the impossible choice between financial security and prioritizing their well-being. Sadly, this was the reality for Cameron Carden at Salisbury University. We believe no student should endure such hardship, and universities should prioritize student wellness above all else. Senate Bill 467 offers a crucial solution by establishing a consistent withdrawal policy that recognizes and prioritizes student well-being, including mental health.

Currently, the lack of policy leaves students vulnerable. Without guaranteed reimbursement for extenuating circumstances, the financial burden adds unimaginable stress to already challenging situations. Senate Bill 567 rectifies this by creating a standardized, legally binding policy. This ensures students facing unforeseen hardships, like Cameron, can prioritize their well-being without facing financial penalties

While some USM institutions address physical health concerns for reimbursement, many unfortunately overlook mental health. While UMBC recognizes mental health as an extenuating circumstance, the lack of a system-wide mandate puts this progress at risk. Senate Bill 567 safeguards this progress by ensuring mental health is recognized within USM institution withdrawal policies.

Accordingly, UMBC SGA respectfully requests a **favorable** committee report on Senate Bill 567.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jaden Farris".

Jaden Farris

Director of Government Affairs
Student Government Association
University of Maryland, Baltimore County