



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

Honorable Guy Guzzone
Budget and Taxation Committee Chair
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 West Wing
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Honorable Ben Barnes
Appropriations Committee Chair
Lowe House Office Building, Room 121
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Chairman Barnes,

I am writing to support increased funding for the Sellinger program and the Maryland Independent College and University Association's (MICUA) request to reverse the cuts to this program in the FY 25 proposed budget. Frederick County Government fully supports MICUA's request to:

1. Preserve the legislative integrity of the Sellinger formula, reject the language of the proposed Budget Reconciliation Financing Act (BRFA) and restore the formula to its original methodology.
2. Include a new provision in the BRFA that ensures no single MICUA institution can receive more than 35% of the Sellinger formula allocation in one fiscal year.

The strength of Maryland's higher education system is built on the Sellinger and Cade formulas. These formulas provide consistent investments in Maryland's ecosystem of higher education. No individual sector of higher education can possibly meet all the demands of our economy and the needs of Maryland students, which is why, for 50 years the General Assembly has sought to provide to the independent sector a small portion of the per student funding that is provided to USM institutions through the Sellinger program. Sellinger funds are dedicated to financial aid for Maryland students.

The BRFA cut creates huge funding disparities among the MICUA institutions where some receive drastic reductions (74%, 52%, 46%), eight receive cuts ranging from 10 to 22% and one institution receives nearly the same allotment as the prior year. The MICUA proposal will balance these disparities.

Mount St. Mary's University and Hood College are vital components of Frederick County and spur economic growth throughout our community. Their students are valued members of the Frederick County landscape. These institutions will be negatively affected without these necessary adjustments which MICUA is proposing, which will ultimately hurt students.

I urge you and your committee members to reject the language in the BRFA and adopt the MICUA compromise proposal, which still results in a \$26 million cut to the program and a nearly 20% reduction with a more equitable implementation.

Sincerely,

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive