

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 14, 2024

SB 527 - Community Colleges - Contraception - Access Requirements

Position: Favorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, supports **SB 527**, which would require colleges to consult with students to develop and implement a plan to provide student access to over-the-counter contraception on community college campuses.

MACC is in strong support of ensuring students have access to a full range of preventative, reproductive, and sexual health offerings. Many students may not have easy access to healthcare services and access to contraceptives is essential for promoting health equity. Low-income students and students from marginalized communities may face greater barriers to accessing healthcare services, including contraceptives.

While MACC is in support of the Senate version of this bill, it is worth noting the House bill is not in the same posture – and includes 24/7 access. Unlike residential campuses where students live on-site, the majority of students at community colleges commute to campus for classes and activities. As a result, there is typically low overnight attendance, especially during late-night hours. Mandating sexual health offerings 24/7 would not effectively serve the needs of students if there are few or no students present to utilize these services during those times. MACC recommends the Committee to support the Senate version of this bill to ensure this is done in an inclusive, effective way.

Maryland's community colleges understand that offering over-the-counter contraceptives is an important step toward promoting reproductive health, supporting student success, and addressing health disparities within the student population. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** vote on **SB 527**.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.