

Ellis Signed Testimony SB 81.pdf

Uploaded by: Arthur Ellis

Position: FAV

ARTHUR ELLIS, CPA
Legislative District 28
Charles County

ASSISTANT DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

Senate Chair
Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Chair, Charles, St. Mary's and Calvert
Counties' Senate Delegation



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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January 23, 2024

**Testimony of Senator Arthur Ellis in Support of Senate Bill 81: Higher Education - College of
Southern Maryland - Budget**

Dear Chair Feldman, Madam Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Education, Energy, and
Environment Committee:

This bill alters the information shown in the budget of the College of Southern Maryland; requires certain
county commissioners to review and approve the budget of the resident campus in certain counties; and
authorizes the Board of Trustees of the College of Southern Maryland to approve certain transfers of
appropriations.

I urge your favorable report on Senate Bill 81.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arthur Ellis".

Arthur Ellis – District 28

SB81_MACC_BPhillips_Oppose.pdf

Uploaded by: Brad Phillips

Position: UNF

EDUCATION, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

**Testimony by:
Dr. Brad Phillips, Executive Director
January 24, 2024**

SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Association of Community College (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, has concerns about SB 81, which would impact how regional community colleges are funded by their local government. Community colleges that provide postsecondary educational opportunities to residents of multiple counties need to be able to operate within a framework and budget that provides support for all students enrolled as is the mission of all community colleges.

The College of Southern Maryland is a regional college serving three counties with equal representation on the governing Board of Trustees. In 2020, the Maryland General Assembly authorized the College of Southern Maryland to operate under a unified budget, effective for Fiscal Year 2022. This authorization provides for an equitable distribution of local funding based on a student's county of residence as well as where they are taking classes, enabling the college to respond nimbly to students' needs, meet disparities and create equity.

Today, one operational budget for the College of Southern Maryland as a regional community college enables efficiencies and removes unnecessary duplications. The concern with SB81 is the potential for proposed changes to disrupt the collaborative spirit, operational efficiencies, and student equity that all Maryland's regional colleges have been able to achieve in working with its local jurisdictions through the one college operating budget. This legislation would repeal the ability to act in the best interest of students.

Because of these concerns, MACC urges an unfavorable report.

SB81_Christy Lombardi_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Christy Lombardi

Position: UNF

**Senate Bill 81
Christy Lombardi, Trustee, Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland
Unfavorable Report**

January 24, 2024

I am Christy Lombardi and as a Trustee for the College of Southern Maryland, I request an Unfavorable Report for SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget.

As we prepare our Fiscal Year 2025 budget, the College of Southern Maryland is only now in our second year of operating under a unified budget model. If I may, let me explain how this local budget process works.

County operating budget requests are based on three factors: first, the county’s Full Time Equivalency as determined by MHEC, which is the Maryland Higher Education Commission; second, by the unduplicated headcount within that county; and third, by the square footage of the campus buildings located within the specific county.

Funding increases are calculated by distributing these costs based on each county’s share of these factors. County boundaries do not exist for our students when it comes to the classes they attend, the services they receive, or the online and in-person programming they require. This funding formula and the equitable distribution of the funds we receive are grounded in the same equitable principle of meeting our students where they are, supporting their mobility, and avoiding expensive duplication.

The college currently provides two annual budget reports to the state and going forward we acknowledge the importance of providing this same accountability to our three counties. The two reports show the college’s budget revenues and expenditures by each county at the beginning and at the end of the fiscal year. These comprehensive reports will be equally valuable for our county partners to see how their funding is being spent and in holding the college accountable for the distribution of these allocations.

Combined, our three counties fund about 30 percent of the college’s overall annual operating budget, and we are grateful for their support to help make the College of Southern Maryland more accessible to the demands of our students and more efficient in the way we manage and operate our virtual and physical campuses serving our three counties.

The college's current budget process enables great flexibility and efficiency in the operations of the College. I ask for your unfavorable report of SB81 to allow us to maintain our current budget process as we continue to work with our county partners in providing them greater accountability and transparency. Thank you.

Christy Lombardi, Trustee
Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland

CalvertCounty_OPP_SB0081.pdf

Uploaded by: Earl Hance

Position: UNF



**CALVERT COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

175 Main Street
Prince Frederick, Maryland 20678
410-535-1600 • 301-855-1243
www.calvertcountymd.gov

Board of Commissioners
Mark C. Cox Sr.
Catherine M. Grasso
Earl F. Hance
Mike Hart
Todd Ireland

January 23, 2024

The Honorable Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SB0081 – College of Southern Maryland - Budget

Senator Feldman:

The Board of County Commissioners for Calvert County joins the College of Southern Maryland and writes to also **OPPOSE SB0081**, and ask the Committee for an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT**.

For background, prior to 2000, Charles County Community College served Calvert and St. Mary's counties under operational agreements. The law enacted in 2000 provided for one regional college serving three campuses with equal representation on the governing Board of Trustees. There are nine Trustees, three from each county appointed by the governor. That same legislation created three separate and independent operating budgets for each campus. In 2020 Laws of Maryland Ch. 393, supported by the College and the three counties, was passed unanimously in both Chambers. By that 2020 legislation the laws regarding the allocation of the College of Southern Maryland's budget was changed to a unified budget. Budget unification: 1) better serves the students, many of whom take classes on multiple campuses and online; and 2) allows greater flexibility and efficiencies in college operations.

The unified budget legislation passed in 2020 has worked as intended and is working well. We, therefore, join the College of Southern Maryland in opposing this SB0081, and ask the Committee for an **UNFAVORABLE REPORT**.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact County Administrator Julian M. Willis at 410-535-1600, extension 2201, or County Attorney John Norris at 410-535-1600, extension 2566. Thank you for your kind consideration of our position regarding this important Bill.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CALVERT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Handwritten signature of Earl F. Hance in blue ink.

Earl F. Hance, President

Handwritten signature of Catherine M. Grasso in blue ink.

Catherine M. Grasso, Vice President

Handwritten signature of Mark C. Cox Sr. in blue ink.

Mark C. Cox Sr.

Handwritten signature of Mike Hart in blue ink.

Mike Hart

Handwritten signature of Todd Ireland in blue ink.

Todd Ireland

cc: The Honorable Senator Michael Jackson
The Honorable Senator Jack Bailey

SB81_Genesis Ingal_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Genesis Ingal

Position: UNF

Senate Bill 81
Genesis Ingal
Unfavorable Report
January 24, 2024

My name is Genesis Ingal, and I am a Nursing Student at the College of Southern Maryland, and I have lived in Lexington Park in St. Mary's County for four years now.

It is my understanding that SB 81 would put limitations on the accessibility, affordability, and flexibility that me and my fellow students currently have in pursuing our education – and a better life – so I am asking for an unfavorable report of Senate Bill 81.

I attend CSM because of its diversified student body, great scholarship opportunities, incredible programs, and its environment to connect and network with the entire Southern Maryland region. From my first day at CSM, I have attended classes at all of the college's campuses, and online, because I needed to attend classes that were compatible with my schedule. And most of my classes are specialized because I am in the nursing program.

For instance, I took Anatomy and Physiology classes and labs, Microbiology Lecture and Lab, and two other classes at the Prince Frederick Campus in Calvert County. I took my Statistics and Chemistry and two other classes at the La Plata Campus in Charles County.

And I took many of my General Education classes and Professional Nursing classes at the Leonardtown Campus in St. Mary's County because those classes best suited by schedule. The rest of my classes I took online.

Now that I have finished all my nursing pre-requisites, I attend classes at CSM's Regional Hughesville Campus in Charles County because that is where the new Center for

Health Sciences is located. At that campus me and my classmates have an incredible opportunity to experience a real-life learning environment with input and guidance from expert health care providers from all three counties.

I succeed at CSM because of the flexibility of choices provided online and in person. I also serve as the Leonardtown Campus Student Government Association President – and as the students' representative, it is my experience, that most of my fellow students also attend classes in all three counties.

I hope my testimony sheds light on how CSM students approach our studies. I hope you make the right decision to allow my community college to continue to provide outstanding programming and support services to those of us who need access to affordable and flexible education opportunities across all three counties. Thank you.

Genesis Ingal

47193 Schwartzkopf Drive

Lexington Park, MD

SB81_CSM Board of Trustees_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Smith Hupp

Position: UNF

**Senate Bill 81
Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland
Unfavorable Report
January 24, 2024**

As the Board of Trustees for the College of Southern Maryland, we request an Unfavorable Report for SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget.

In 2000 the College of Southern Maryland became one regionalized community college. The law enacted in 2000 provided for one regional college serving three counties with equal representation on the governing Board of Trustees. That same legislation created three separate and independent operating budgets for each campus. At the time, that local budget process worked well. But times have changed, especially in today’s post-pandemic world.

In 2020, following two years of extensive deliberations by the College with our three county Boards of Commissioners and our Delegation to develop a local budget process, the State Legislature authorized the College of Southern Maryland to operate under a unified budget, effective for Fiscal Year 2022. The counties agreed that the College’s operating budget model needed to focus on serving the students of each county, rather than just the physical facilities of each campus. Together, we agreed that a more equitable distribution of local funding based on a student’s county of residence as well as where they are taking classes. The process also honors our students’ success, academic excellence, and financial and operational efficiency as core expectations and that the college must be able to respond nimbly to students’ needs.

The College truly reflects the regional concept. The College is the workforce pipeline for all of Southern Maryland and employers welcome qualified graduates from all three counties. Like the college has a footprint in each of our three counties as well as a much larger virtual presence, our workforce partners similarly hold a regional perspective. In fact, the college held a community convening in September and we received overwhelming feedback from our region’s partners in the nonprofit, military, healthcare, and economic development fields that CSM must approach our programming from a regional perspective and that the college be the hub of workforce development in Southern Maryland.

We also know that our students are mobile, and because of our strategic locations throughout Southern Maryland, students who work in one county and live in another can choose the location that best serves them including online. The college has 11 online programs of study and more than 26,000 enrollments just in online courses. This tremendous growth of our online classes has been possible due to the ability to assign resources and costs to a virtual campus that is tied to all three counties.

As of Fiscal Year 23, almost 45 percent of CSM students attend two or more campus locations across the three counties and another 32 percent take online classes. There is tremendous growth in online education. And as notably demonstrated during the pandemic, there are no county boundaries in the virtual classroom. The ability to allocate resources based on student's needs and where they are ultimately benefits all students.

As we prepare our Fiscal Year 2025 budget, the College of Southern Maryland is only now in our second year of operating under a unified budget model. We fully recognize the trust placed in the College by our three Boards of County Commissioners and our Southern Maryland Delegation members when they unanimously endorsed our local budget process. We also understand the imperative for accountability and transparency and the need for continued collaboration with our counties. We must now advance this trust, understanding we need to provide fuller reporting that demonstrates greater accountability and transparency to assure the counties that our distributions of their county's funding are equitably allocated.

Combined, our three counties fund about 30 percent of our overall annual operating budget, and we are grateful for their support to help make the College of Southern Maryland more accessible to the demands of our students and more efficient in the way we manage and operate our virtual and physical campuses serving our three counties. It is important to note that our concern with SB81 lies in the potential for these proposed changes to disrupt the collaborative spirit and operational efficiencies and student equity that have been achieved through the current one college budget process.

As trustees, the nine of us represent our counties equally, and we are committed to support each location equitably according to their unique needs and student population. We respectfully request this committee provide an unfavorable report to SB81 and allow us to maintain our current budget process as we continue to work with our county partners in providing them greater accountability and transparency. Thank you.

Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland

Shawn B. Coates, Chair
Sonja M. Cox, Vice Chair
Kenneth (Kee) Abell
Celeste Alexander-Frye
Cathy Allen
Pamela Cousins
Jose Gonzalez
Christy Lombardi
Cordelia Postell

SB81_Kee Abell_Unfavorable.pdf_safe.pdf

Uploaded by: Kenneth Abell

Position: UNF



**Senate Bill 81
Kee Abell, Trustee, Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland
Unfavorable Report**

January 24, 2024

I am Kee Abell and as a Trustee for the College of Southern Maryland, I request an Unfavorable Report for SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget.

The College of Southern Maryland is the workforce pipeline for all of Southern Maryland and employers welcome qualified graduates from all three counties. Like the college has a footprint in each of our three counties as well as a much larger virtual presence, our workforce partners similarly hold a regional perspective. In fact, the college held a community convening in September and we received overwhelming feedback from our region’s partners in the nonprofit, military, healthcare, and economic development fields that CSM must approach our programming from a regional perspective and that the college be the hub of workforce development in Southern Maryland.

Today, CSM responds nimbly to our students and their needs. We know our students are mobile, and because of our strategic locations throughout Southern Maryland, students who work in one county and live in another can choose the location that best serves them. For instance, we have St. Mary’s County residents who are learning at Charles and Calvert County campuses and virtually – and who may very well go to work in Charles County. CSM truly reflects the regional concept.

Speaking of the virtual campus, the college has 11 online programs of study and more than 26,000 enrollments just in online courses. In fact, Intelligent.com rankings once again includes CSM among the “Best Community Colleges in Maryland,” and the nation’s “Best Online Associate in Information Technology and Systems Degree Programs” for 2024. This tremendous growth of our online classes has been possible due to the ability to assign resources and costs to a virtual campus that is tied to all three counties.

As of Fiscal Year 23, almost 45 percent of CSM students attend two or more campus locations across the three counties and another 32 percent take online classes. There is tremendous growth in online education. And as notably demonstrated during the pandemic, there are no county boundaries in the virtual classroom. The ability to allocate resources based on student’s needs and where they are ultimately benefits all students.

As Trustees, the nine of us represent our counties equally, and we are committed to support each location equitably according to their unique needs and student population.

La Plata Campus
8730 Mitchell Road, PO Box 910
La Plata, MD 20646
301-934-2251 • 301-870-3008

Leonardtown Campus
22950 Hollywood Road
Leonardtown, MD 20650
240-725-5300

Prince Frederick Campus
115 J.W. Williams Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
443-550-6000

Regional Hughesville Campus
6105 Foster Place,
Hughesville MD 20637
301-539-4730

As a regional college operating as one college, CSM can best serve our 14,329 students and their success fairly, strategically, and equitably regardless of their campus location.

For these reasons, I ask the committee's unfavorable report to SB 81. Thank you.

Kee Abell, Trustee
Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland

SB81_Shawn Coates_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Shawn Coates

Position: UNF

Senate Bill 81
Shawn B. Coates, Chair, Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland
Unfavorable Report

January 24, 2024

As the chair of the Board of Trustees for the College of Southern Maryland I request an Unfavorable Report for SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget.

In 2000 the College of Southern Maryland became one regionalized community college. The law enacted in 2000 provided for one regional college serving three counties with equal representation on the governing Board of Trustees. That same legislation created three separate and independent operating budgets for each campus. At the time, that local budget process worked well. But times have changed, especially in today’s post-pandemic world.

In 2020, following two years of extensive deliberations by the College with our three county boards of commissioners and our delegation to develop a local budget process, the State Legislature authorized the College of Southern Maryland to operate under a unified budget, effective for Fiscal Year 2022.

The counties working with CSM agreed that the college’s budget model needed to focus on serving the students of each county, rather than just their buildings. Together, we further agreed that a more equitable sharing of costs of instruction and student services was to be based on each county’s enrollment.

In developing this approach, front-of-mind was that the process must ensure equitable distribution of local funding based on a student’s county of residence as well as where they are taking classes. The process also honors our students’ success, academic excellence, and financial and operational efficiency as core expectations and that the college must be able to respond nimbly to students’ needs.

Today, one operational budget remains a valid local process as it enables efficiencies and removes unnecessary duplications. It is not fiscally possible to replicate all programs at all four of our campuses, and the one-college budget allows us to have employees and contractors work across multiple campuses making more efficient use of resources and talent.

As a regional college, CSM can scale student services across the region, utilizing existing staff. This allows us to meet disparities and create equity.

It is important to note that our concern with SB81 lies in the potential for these proposed changes to disrupt the collaborative spirit and operational efficiencies and student equity that have been achieved through the current one college budget process.

I therefore request this committee provide an unfavorable report to SB81. Thank you.

Shawn B. Coates, Chair
Board of Trustees, College of Southern Maryland

SB81_Yolanda Wilson_Unfavorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Yolanda Wilson

Position: UNF

Senate Bill 81
Yolanda Wilson, President, College of Southern Maryland
Unfavorable Report

January 24, 2024

As president of the College of Southern Maryland, I request an Unfavorable Report for SB 81 – Higher Education – College of Southern Maryland – Budget.

We fully recognize the trust placed in the college by our three Boards of County Commissioners and our Southern Maryland Delegation members when they unanimously endorsed our local budget process in 2020. We also understand the imperative for accountability and transparency and the need for continued collaboration with our counties.

Their endorsement in 2020 of the legislation that unified the college’s budget was a first step. We must now advance this trust, understanding we need to provide fuller reporting that demonstrates greater accountability and transparency to assure the counties that our distributions of their county’s funding are equitably allocated.

SB 81 would return CSM’s budget to the previous system of budgeting, a model that is no longer relevant. The educational landscape has shifted dramatically over the last decades, and how we do business has shifted. In 2000 when we became the College of Southern Maryland, instruction was primarily offered in person; 24 years later and in a post-pandemic world, we offer students a variety of learning modalities and services that necessitate the flexibility of our current budgeting more than ever.

We respectfully ask that the local budget process remain intact. CSM has a unified budget that supports our students and services at all physical and virtual campuses. This budget gives the college the flexibility required to operate effectively and provides a funding formula that remains equitable over time.

The prior budget model resulted in a duplication of services and funding limits that prevented the expansion of programs and services when needed due to a lack of funding. Having one budget allows us to allocate precious dollars where needed to best support our students. Furthermore, one operational budget supports the reality that our students have choices and no longer stay at their “home” campus. They commute among campuses, which means county funding already supports students from across the region.

The broad impact in reversing our budget process would be limiting resources which in turn would restrict student access to programs, their momentum to succeed, and their mobility to get better paying jobs. Limited resources would lead to increased funding requests to support duplicative programs and services for those locations and counties.

I respectfully request the committee's unfavorable report of SB81. Thank you.

Yolanda S. Wilson
President, College of Southern Maryland