

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB637**

### **Higher Education – Undocumented Students – Out of State Tuition Exemption Eligibility**

Dear Honorable Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and Members of the Committee,

My name is Yasmine Juhar, a resident of District 14 and a Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus student. I am here on behalf of MC Raptors for Immigrant Rights, a student club I started solely for the purpose to advocate and serve the communities most underrepresented. I see the value and importance of protecting and aiding the people who have continued to contribute, since Maryland has over 11,970 undocumented students in higher education every year and a little over 2,000 undocumented high schoolers graduating every year (Higher Ed Immigration Portal, 2024). Many of which attend Montgomery College or have the hopes and dreams of attending. Unfortunately, the reality is that the current MD Dream Act still restricts so many other young immigrant students from applying due to the 3 year tax requirement. Changing the requirement to 1 year would allow more students to attend public Maryland institutions like Montgomery College and contribute to the rich culture we have in our campuses, and may even join or create clubs like ours.

I say all this to encourage you in using your power to service this community. We can not say Maryland is a sanctuary for immigrants, and yet they are away from services that would greatly benefit them and make their journeys to whatever aspirations lie within their reach, possible. Again, you have the power to push forth a bill that could alleviate some of the burdens faced in our community.

I encourage you all to vote yes and pass SB0637 and allow undocumented students the access to an affordable college experience.