



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

SB0527

February 14, 2024

TO: Members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations
RE: Senate Bill 527 – Community Colleges - Contraception - Access Requirements
POSITION: FAVORABLE

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 527.

SB 527 proposes all community colleges to develop and implement a plan to provide students with access to over-the-counter contraceptives. Further, it requires that this plan be developed collaboratively with students. Access to affordable and convenient contraceptives is an essential component of reproductive healthcare and can significantly impact students' lives.ⁱ By involving students and student organizations in the development and implementation of the plan outlined in the bill, Maryland will foster a collaborative approach that considers the unique needs and preferences of the community college population. This legislation is a crucial step towards ensuring the well-being and success of our community college students.

Over-the-counter contraceptives are a safe and effective means of birth control.ⁱⁱ Providing access to them will ensure that students have the tools they need to make decisions about their reproductive health. Unplanned pregnancies can pose significant challenges to a student's educational and career goals.ⁱⁱⁱ Research shows that providing women with access to contraception increases the likelihood that they will continue their education beyond high school, increases their participation in the workforce, and increases their earning power.ⁱⁱ Making contraceptives more accessible will support students in their pursuit of academic success and career advancement. This, in turn, benefits the community by fostering a well-educated and empowered workforce.

Involving students and student organizations in the planning process acknowledges the importance of their voices and experiences. This collaborative effort will ensure that the implemented plan is not only effective, but also reflective of the diverse needs and preferences within the community college student body. For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on SB 527.

ⁱ Brittain, A. W., Loyola Briceno, A. C., Pazol, K., Zapata, L. B., Decker, E., Rollison, J. M., Malcolm, N. M., Romero, L. M., & Koumans, E. H. (2018). Youth-Friendly Family Planning Services for Young People: A Systematic Review Update. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 55(5), 725–735. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2018.06.010>

ⁱⁱ American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' Committee on Gynecologic Practice. (2019). Over-the-Counter Access to Hormonal Contraception. Retrieved from <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2019/10/over-the-counter-access-to-hormonal-contraception>

ⁱⁱⁱ Sonfield, A., Hasstedt, K., Kavanaugh, M., & Anderson, R. (2013). The Social and Economic Benefits of Women's Ability To Determine Whether and When to Have Children. The Guttmacher Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/pubs/social-economic-benefits.pdf>