



THE SHRIVER CENTER

**House Appropriations Committee
House Bill 1114
Public Service Internship Scholarship Program – Renaming and Funding
March 5, 2025
Letter of Support**

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of House Bill 1114, which renames and expands funding for the Public Service Internship Scholarship Program. The Maryland Public Service Scholars (MPSS) programs, administered by the Shriver Center at UMBC, have a long history of preparing students for impactful careers in public service. This bill ensures that more students can access these opportunities, and in turn, strengthens pathways for dedicated professionals serving Maryland's communities.

Since 1987, over 1,300 Maryland students from 123 institutions, including 35 in Maryland, have participated in MPSS programs, contributing 524,000+ hours of service to 118 nonprofit organizations, 24 Maryland state departments, 26 state agencies, and 18 federal and local entities. These internships provide real-world experience, build leadership skills, and help students form professional networks that lead to lasting careers in public service. The state, in turn, benefits from a diverse and talented workforce prepared to tackle pressing social challenges.

MPSS cultivates public servants who are self-aware, critical thinkers, and effective problem-solvers. Through structured mentorship, skill-building seminars, and professional exposure, MPSS fellows leave their internships with a deeper commitment to careers that advance public good. Fellows contribute increased capacity to their host organizations, allowing them to tackle special projects and address critical needs. Additionally, fellows present final policy papers and nonprofit strategy plans, providing valuable insights and recommendations on public service challenges.

The investment proposed in House Bill 1114 is essential to sustaining and expanding this vital program. This year alone, 270 students from Maryland, attending 77 different schools, applied for only 31 available slots, highlighting the demand for public service opportunities. The investment proposed in House Bill 1114 will help meet this demand by expanding internship slots and providing stipends that make public service careers accessible to all students.

Since its inception, MPSS fellows have contributed over \$15.5 million in value to Maryland. Alumni serve in leadership roles across government, nonprofits, and the legal sector, advancing education, healthcare, environmental policy, social justice, and more.

We urge a favorable report on House Bill 1114. Thank you for your consideration.