



**Testimony in SUPPORT of
House Bill 473: Maryland Community Colleges Promise Scholarship Program – Revisions**

Appropriations Committee

Position: Support

February 4, 2025

At Strong Schools Maryland, we work to support the faithful implementation and full funding of the promises legislated through the landmark Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. The Blueprint envisions a public school system where all students have access to post college and career readiness pathways through Pillar 3. As such, **Strong Schools Maryland urges a favorable report on House Bill 473**, which seeks to adjust the duration for which a Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship recipient can retain their award under certain circumstances.

Currently, recipients of the scholarship can only receive the award for a fixed period. This structure fails to account for students who pursue different educational tracks and alternative pathways to their career. HB473 provides a much-needed adjustment by:

- Extending eligibility to up to three years for students enrolled in a noncredit vocational certificate, licensure, certification, apprenticeship courses, or a certificate at a community college; and
- Extending eligibility up to six years for part-time students pursuing an associate degree at a community college.

The Blueprint recognizes that there are a multitude of unique paths that students can take post graduation. The bill aligns the provisions of this scholarship program with the Blueprint by aiming to support students who might be taking alternative pathways to pursue their career goals.

The changes proposed in this bill would strengthen the program by extending eligibility timelines and providing flexibility for students. As a result, House Bill 473 is a step towards ensuring that Marylanders can access and complete their postsecondary pathways without undue financial and administrative burdens.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to issue a Favorable Report on House Bill 473.

Please contact Kenzie Funk at kenzie@strongschoolsmaryland.org for additional questions.