



March 24, 2025

Senator Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Subject: Letter of Support for HB772 – Career Counseling for College and Career Readiness

Dear Senator Feldman,

On behalf of the Anne Arundel County Commission for Women (AACCW), I am writing to express our strong support for **HB 772 – Career Counseling for College and Career Readiness**, a critical measure aimed at ensuring career counseling remains at the center of a student's journey toward college and career readiness. This bill passed the House with a vote of 136-2, thus showing strong bipartisan support. This bill has now been referred to your committee. Its aim is to strengthen the partnership between local workforce development boards, schools, and community organizations to better prepare Maryland students for their future careers.

Our Commission has witnessed firsthand the transformative impact that career development and exploration opportunities can have on students. Through our *Journey to Success* Career Panels, we have worked to empower teens preparing to enter the workforce, providing them with direct access to professional women from diverse industries across Anne Arundel County. These panels create a unique platform for school-aged girls to engage in meaningful discussions on higher education, vocational training, and career pathways. A key theme of the panel is that career journeys are unique, and success looks different for everyone.

This year, we expanded our *Journey to Success* program through a partnership with the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC). AAWDC, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, delivers innovative, high-quality workforce development services to Anne Arundel County businesses and residents. Notably, AAWDC provides in-school Career Coaches at every middle and high school in the county, helping students navigate their college and career readiness journeys. Through this partnership, we have collaborated with individual Career Coaches to support career fairs and career exploration opportunities at their respective schools.

As a result of this collaboration, the *Journey to Success* program reached over 500 students across three middle schools in Anne Arundel County this year. These panels have been instrumental in helping students explore potential career paths, gain valuable life lessons, and hear personal stories of challenges and successes from working professionals. Looking ahead,



the Commission is eager to expand its outreach to non-traditional and at-risk youth in the coming year, ensuring that all students—regardless of background—have access to meaningful career development resources.

HB 772 aligns directly with these efforts. It ensures that county boards of education allocate sustained funding for career counseling programs, including partnerships like ours with AAWDC. Additionally, the bill strengthens accountability and program improvement by requiring annual reports on the effectiveness of career counseling services. By reinforcing the connection between workforce development entities and schools, HB 772 provides students with the tools they need to make informed career choices and transition into high-demand jobs, vocational training, or higher education.

As a commission committed to equity, opportunity, and economic mobility, we firmly believe that HB 772 is a necessary step toward ensuring Maryland students have the support they need to succeed. We urge you and your colleagues to support this bill and champion its passage. Your leadership on this issue will make a lasting impact on Maryland students, families, and the future workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to reach out if we can provide additional information or testimony in support of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Stacie Spragins
Chair, Advocacy Committee
Anne Arundel County Commission for Women
Stacie.spragins@gmail.com
(562) 587-4180

Carolyn Keaton Culp
Chair
Maryland Commission for Women
ckculp@gmail.com

Gina Worthey
Vice Chair
Maryland Commission for Women
gcworthey@gmail.com