

# Testimony of Joyce Yun

## The Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

### Fav. SB552 | Education - High School Graduation Requirements - Financial Aid Application

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am Joyce Yun, a sophomore at Glenelg Country School in Howard County Maryland. I support **SB552**, a bill mandating that every high school student apply for FAFSA or a FAFSA equivalent as a graduation requirement. This bill works to promote and destigmatize FAFSA, helping Maryland graduates thrive in their higher education journey.

FAFSA is an opportunity for thousands of Maryland graduates to attend the college of their choice by decreasing financial constraints in the process of selecting a college. Unfortunately, not nearly enough Maryland graduates know about FAFSA. **SB552** addresses this issue directly, as by implementing a FAFSA application into the graduation requirements, all students in Maryland will have the chance to save thousands of dollars. It is heartbreaking how many students do not know about FAFSA and the opportunities it provides low-income students all across the state.

As a high school student, I have witnessed countless friends torn between paying tens of thousands of dollars for education at an institution they truly connect with or committing to the college that offers them the greatest merit-based scholarship due to their belief that they wouldn't qualify for FAFSA even if they applied. This common mentality leads to thousands of Maryland graduates being unable to attend the college they believe they will excel the greatest in, and millions of unused FAFSA dollars. The implementation of **SB552** in Maryland public schools would directly address this issue by mandating FAFSA applications for all Maryland graduates, leading to greater opportunities for students all across Maryland.

In some Maryland high schools, students may see applying for financial aid as shameful, or they may judge others for applying. Students should not be forced to choose between their social life and their ability to financially support higher education. **SB552** alleviates the social pressure put on students when applying for FAFSA by making it a requirement for everyone.

**SB552** supports all Maryland graduates in their journey to higher education by raising awareness, promoting application, and destigmatizing financial aid. I urge the committee to support this bill, thereby supporting thousands of young Marylanders.

Thank you for your legislation and commitment to supporting Maryland citizens in their journey to higher education.

Sincerely,  
Joyce Yun