
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 5, 2025

**SB 813 - Howard Community College - Board of Trustees, Meetings, and Contracts -
Alterations Ho. Co. 1-25**

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, respectfully opposes **SB 813**, which imposes governance and operational changes on the Board of Community College Trustees for Howard County. While MACC does not typically engage in single-school legislation, this bill sets a concerning precedent that could invite further legislative intervention in the governance of Maryland's community colleges statewide.

Maryland's community colleges operate under a state-local partnership model, where locally appointed trustees make governance decisions based on their institutions' unique needs. SB 813 disrupts this model by introducing state-imposed mandates for a single college, creating an uneven governance framework that could lead to different governance structures across the system. If the General Assembly begins modifying governance structures, operational policies, and leadership requirements at the institutional level, it could undermine the ability of locally appointed trustees to govern effectively and independently.

Furthermore, SB 813 is too prescriptive with board functions and contract negotiations, eroding local decision-making authority. By mandating specific board training, survey requirements, and contract renewal procedures, the bill restricts the flexibility of the Board of Trustees to govern in the best interest of the institution and its students. These types of governance decisions should be addressed holistically through systemwide higher education policy discussions—not through one-off legislation for a single institution.

While transparency and accountability are essential, legislating operational details at the state level sets a precedent that could impact all community colleges in the future. Maryland's community college system is strong because it is responsive to local workforce and student needs, and governance decisions should remain local. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **UNFAVORABLE** vote on **SB 813**, as written.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.