



## **HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**

### **House Bill 799**

#### **Economic Development – Maryland Innovation Initiative University Partnership Extension Program – Establishment**

**February 20, 2025**

#### **Favorable**

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 799. I would also like to thank Delegates Vogel and Buckly for supporting Bowie State University. House Bill 799 will extend the Maryland Innovation Initiative University Partnership Program within the Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO). This extension, and the proposed amendment adding fiscal year 2026, will extend and expand opportunities for technology validation, entrepreneurial development, and industry engagement at Bowie State University.

The MII technology validation program has transformed technological innovation and entrepreneurship at Bowie State University and the community. This initiative has fostered a network of innovators, uniting faculty, students, entrepreneurs, and researchers to tackle local and global challenges. Key projects include a mobile food and feed growing model, biomaterials for antimicrobial catheters, and AI-driven intellectual properties for the music industry, resulting in new intellectual property generation.

The MII assistance helped establish a Technology Transfer and Innovation Office (TTIO) at Bowie State University, which supports researchers in turning scientific knowledge into intellectual property (IP) through translational research. With 6-8 active labs on campus, the TTIO provides hands-on support, including prototyping, workshops, and individual consultations. This initiative has enhanced private sector engagement in contractual research, Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology transfer (SBIR/STTR) funding, and licensing agreements, aiming to increase IP generation through partnerships with entrepreneurs and industries. Additionally, the MII program has fostered the development of collaborative venture labs, positioning Bowie State as a Regional HBCU Innovation Hub.

The ExcellenceXtreme Team Pilot Program, launched on October 12, 2023, provided practical experience for eight computer tech students. It focused on IT roles and developed a Capstone website. The program continues to evolve, improves student counselling processes and creates an Entrepreneurship Student Pathway Simulation Tool.

In addition, as part of a shared vision, Bowie State University plans to establish a venture lab that encourages collaboration among faculty, researchers, and entrepreneurs, ultimately driving local economic development and job creation. This strategic approach aims to transform our efforts into a sustained innovation hub, targeting \$25-\$30 million in funding within three years, and over \$50-\$100 million value can be generated as tech startup ventures within five years.

In conclusion, House Bill 799 will strengthen student and faculty success by leveraging our robust research infrastructure and support collaboration between eligible universities and industry partners.

For these reasons, Bowie State University urges a favorable vote on the proposed amendment adding fiscal year 2026 and the bill.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Harrison, Director of Government Affairs, at [mlharrison@bowiestate.edu](mailto:mlharrison@bowiestate.edu) or (301) 892-0580.