

HB 1313: Higher Education - Tuition Exemption - Incarcerated Individuals: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Appropriations Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **OPPOSE HB 1313** during committee consideration or floor votes.

HB 1313 is unfair, fiscally irresponsible, and prioritizes incarcerated individuals over law-abiding Maryland taxpayers who are struggling to pay for their own or their children's college education. **State resources for higher education—especially tuition waivers and subsidies—are limited and should be directed to residents who are not serving sentences for criminal convictions, many of which involve serious or violent offenses.**

Maryland already offers incarcerated individuals access to higher education through federal Pell Grants (restored in 2023), Second Chance Pell programs, and some state-supported initiatives. **Expanding state-funded tuition exemptions goes beyond what is necessary or equitable, especially when many working families, veterans, and low-income students outside prison face significant barriers to college affordability without similar relief.**

This bill would divert limited taxpayer dollars from deserving Maryland residents to individuals who have been convicted of crimes and are still serving their sentences. It **sends the wrong message about accountability and fairness in how public resources are allocated.**

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote against HB 1313.**

Thank you for your attention to this important fiscal responsibility, equity, and public safety issue.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals