

ZaQuane Dozier
815 Park Ave Apt 5, Baltimore, MD 21201
410-412-0908
zaquaned@gmail.com

Written Testimony in Support of HB1530

To: Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Anne R. Kaiser and Members of the Maryland House Appropriations Committee

From: ZaQuane Dozier, Baltimore City Resident

Hello my name is ZaQuane Dozier and I am passionately in support of HB1530, which would remove the requirements that undocumented students must submit three years of their parents' tax returns to qualify for in-state tuition and federal loans.

Access to education is critical for a functioning democratic society, a fundamental human right. It would be a tragedy to deny anyone the ability to pursue additional education regardless of their immigration status or national origin. As someone who is the grandchild of Jamaican immigrant grandparents, I am proud to have been provided the means to obtain success throughout my adolescence and live a healthy lifestyle due to their hard work and sacrifices. I was able to attend and graduate from UMBC with a Bachelor's in Information Systems. However, while I had the privilege of having my grandparent paying for my education, so many others do not have the means to do so for a variety of reasons. An educated society enables people to understand one another no matter their cultural background. Education prevents hate and bigotry from spreading which improves our society to be more equitable and treat each other with respect and humanity. As Che Guevara once argued, "The walls of the educational system must come down. Education should not be a privilege, so the children of those who have money can study." The United States has one of the lowest literacy rates in education compared to the rest of the world, and most children are not able to succeed due to systemic and financial barriers while not receiving the support they desperately need. This has led our country into a state of fascism and hate that encourages censorship, lack of job skills & critical thinking skills as well as a lack of respect for the humanity of marginalized groups.

Once again, I am asking you all to please consider passing HB1530 so that we can give undocumented students a fair chance at higher education. Education is a fundamental core structure that allows a society to have a well-run and functioning democracy, which we need now more than ever. We have a collective responsibility to ensure that the wealthy and powerful cannot gatekeep the rights to an education for immigrant children, poor & working class people.