

House Appropriations Committee

March 11, 2026

HB 1313 - Higher Education - Tuition Exemption - Incarcerated Individuals

Position: Oppose

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, respectfully opposes **HB 1313**. Maryland's community colleges support efforts to expand access to postsecondary education for incarcerated individuals and those preparing to return to their communities. Community colleges already partner with correctional institutions to provide educational opportunities that help individuals build skills, earn credentials, and prepare for successful reentry into the workforce.

However, House Bill 1313 would establish a broad tuition exemption for incarcerated individuals at all public institutions of higher education in the State. Under the bill, incarcerated individuals would be exempt from paying tuition regardless of available financial aid, with institutions required to absorb the remaining costs after any aid is applied.

Community colleges work diligently to keep tuition affordable for the students and communities they serve, while operating within limited State and local funding. Establishing a new tuition exemption without a dedicated funding source effectively shifts the cost of these programs directly onto institutions and the counties that support them. This creates an unfunded mandate and raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of correctional education programs offered by community colleges.

MACC strongly supports expanding educational opportunities for incarcerated individuals, particularly through programs that connect eligible students to available federal and State financial aid and through partnerships between correctional institutions and higher education institutions. These approaches expand access to education while ensuring that institutions have the resources necessary to sustain high-quality programs for all students. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **UNFAVORABLE** report on **HB 1313**.

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