

Chiamaka Ogbonna
1717 Waverly Way
443 362 0030
chigracebby@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: Chiamaka Ogbonna, Baltimore City Schools Student

Hello, my name is Chiamka Ogbonna and I am a 9th grade student at Western High School in Baltimore City. I am originally from Nigeria; before I came to America, it was a long process. My family worked so hard to get us papers, fly us here, get us comfortable, etc. My culture is a big part of my identity, but even so, I am a person who is very shy, but I am a very hard worker due to me growing up in a household that pushes that passion. Things I like such as writing, art, watching anime, reading, and so much more about me. I believe in a lot of things which is why I am submitting written testimony to support 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.

It is unfair for undocumented students to face extra obstacles when they are working just as hard as any other student to achieve their dreams. Many of these students grew up in Maryland, went to school here, and want to continue their education so they can contribute for their families due to them not having papers. Requiring three years of their parents' tax returns creates a barrier that many families cannot meet. It is unfair and an unreasonable rule to immigrant people who actually want to succeed in life and can't due to this law. HB1530 would give these students a fair chance to pursue higher education and build better futures. This bill would help many young people in Maryland succeed, which would strengthen communities and create more opportunities for everyone.

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. I wouldn't even want to imagine my family without papers, because there are so many things that we could not have been able to do. Now imagine these other kids who actually don't have papers, I am sure they would feel even more worse, so please, consider this.

Respectfully,

Chiamaka Ogbonna