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Written Testimony in Support of HB1530

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

From: Donia Alhaklain, Baltimore City Schools Student

Hello, my name is Donia Alhaklain and I am a 9th-grade student at Western High School in Baltimore City. I'm Donia A. I've been living in Baltimore for 10 years now. I'm from Yemen and love America so much because it's my second country, where I was raised and educated. My favorite subjects are English, History, Social Studies, world culture, and Biology. My interests are writing, photography, learning new languages, and learning about the human body. 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.

Respectfully, I want the HB1530 law to change. It's unfair not just for undocumented students but for all. It's unfair for undocumented students to have these extra obstacles because it distracts them from focusing on their future, and just makes them worry and feel hopeless about not finishing their education to build their future. Undocumented students deserve a fair chance to attend college because they didn't come here to America for nothing, and of course, the way they came in here is not easy, and they lost a lot to make it here to just have more or better opportunities, and so when they're treated unfairly, that's not what they're waiting for or wanting. And also consider that they're not here for anything other than their education and their futures, they deserve the same treatment and opportunities as everyone else. This is important to me because as an immigrant myself, I care about all immigrants and know how they face challenges to just be able to have the opportunities and the most important one is the opportunity of the American dream, and we don't want or expect this American dream to turn into a nightmare.

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.

Respectfully, Donia Alhaklain