



April 1, 2026

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, Appropriations Committee
120 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and the Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee,

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 728 – Higher Education – Community College Promise Scholarship – Eligibility, sponsored by the Wicomico County Delegation.

SB 728 makes an important clarification to the eligibility requirements for the Community College Promise Scholarship by ensuring that Maryland residents who graduate from Delmar High School remain eligible for this critical financial aid program. Because Delmar High School serves students in a unique border community shared between Maryland and Delaware, where Maryland students attend a high school located in Delaware, Maryland residents attending the school may face unintended barriers when applying for certain State financial aid programs tied to high school location or residency criteria.

The Community College Promise Scholarship plays an essential role in Maryland's efforts to expand access to affordable higher education and workforce training. The program supports students pursuing associate degrees, workforce credentials, and transfer pathways while helping reduce financial barriers to postsecondary education. Ensuring that all eligible Maryland residents, particularly those living in border communities, have fair access to this opportunity aligns with the State's broader goals of promoting educational attainment, economic mobility, and workforce development.

SB 728 addresses this narrow but meaningful gap by clarifying eligibility so that Maryland residents graduating from Delmar High School are not inadvertently excluded from participating in the program. By doing so, the bill strengthens equity in the administration of the Community College Promise Scholarship and ensures that students are not disadvantaged due to geographic circumstances beyond their control.

MHEC acknowledges that House Bill 845 has been amended to include changes to the Fallen and Surviving Transportation Workers Scholarship Program, expanding eligibility to include incidents resulting in at least \$100,000,000 in total damages to a transportation facility or transportation facilities project in the State. These amendments are supported by MHEC.

For these reasons, the Maryland Higher Education Commission respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 728.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elena Quiroz-Livanis".

Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Interim Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission