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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: Janvi Madhani, Baltimore City Resident

Hello, my name is Janvi Madhani and I am a PhD worker at Johns Hopkins University in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. As a child of immigrants, I am in unconditional support of the passing of HB1530 in support of undocumented students and their right to access education. 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.

The right to education is an important foundation of my family's history. My grandfather took on a significant financial burden and social outrage to build some of the first women's schools in rural Gujarat in the 50s. I have been raised to believe an educated society is a bulwark of social progress, environmental resilience, political clarity, and independent thought. My parents moved to the United States in the mid-80s for the purpose of higher education, and it is because of the struggles they took on as immigrants in this country that my siblings and I have never had to sacrifice our desires to study, research, and teach.

This bill is vitally important to me and countless others in entrenching a right to education that does not discriminate on the basis of class, citizenship status, or national origin. Baltimore is stronger because of our migrant populations, and removing barriers for vulnerable populations who are already under violent attack in this country is, respectfully, your responsibility as decision makers. We talk about making Baltimore safer, more just, more democratic, yet criminalize and use carceral logic to confine the very communities that are the lifeblood of this city. Undocumented students are deserving of dignity and security, in the classrooms and in our neighborhoods.

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.

Sincerely,

Janvi Madhani