



TESTIMONY FOR HB0534

Nonpublic Schools – Transcripts -Prohibition on Punitive Measures Related to Student Debt

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Smith

Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0534 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Student debt is skyrocketing and it is harming the future of our children. There are too many students who struggle with the burden of student debt, and in some cases never find a job that helps them pay it off. Institutions make it particularly hard for the student to pay off the debt when they refuse to give them a transcript that is necessary to get a job because of the debt.

This bill, if enacted, would preclude nonpublic schools in Maryland that receives state funding would be prohibited from –

- Refusing to provide a transcript to a student or parent/guardian because the student has an
- outstanding debt
- Condition the issuance of a transcript on payment of the debt
- Charge a higher fee for obtaining the transcript due to the outstanding debt
- Provide less favorable treatment of the request due to the outstanding debt
- Use the issuance of the transcript as a means of debt collection

Our members believe that if the student has done the work, the institution should be trying to help them get a job (which includes providing a transcript) and should not use the transcript as a hostage to collect the debt.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee