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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Joint Committees
Administrative, Executive,
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Children, Youth, and Families
Program Open Space and Agricultural
Land Preservation

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Senate Bill 478 – Washington County - Institutions of Higher Education - Dually Enrolled Students

March 11, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 478 takes a practical and equitable step to expand educational opportunity for students in Washington County by modernizing the definition of “dually enrolled student.” By including nonpublic and homeschool students, the bill ensures that all qualified students—regardless of the educational setting they come from—can access the Part-Time Grant Program and the Early College Access Grant. These programs are designed to help students earn college credit early, reduce the cost of higher education, and accelerate workforce readiness. SB 478 simply aligns state policy with today’s diverse education landscape and treats similarly situated students fairly.

Importantly, this legislation does not create a new grant program or fundamentally alter existing standards; it extends eligibility to students who are already meeting the academic requirements to participate in dual enrollment. Allowing nonpublic and homeschool students in Washington County to compete for these grants promotes academic excellence, supports families who are taking initiative in their children’s education, and strengthens the pipeline to Maryland’s institutions of higher education. SB 478 is a targeted, common-sense measure that advances access, affordability, and fairness in higher education, and it deserves favorable consideration.

I thank you for your time and I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike McKay".

Senator Mike McKay
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties