



## TESTIMONY FOR HB1530

### Higher Education – Undocumented Students – Out-of-State Tuition Exemption Eligibility

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Woorman

**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 HB1530 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.

Young people who were brought to the U.S. by their parents and have worked hard in school with the hope of going to college may discover that they face insurmountable obstacles. They are not eligible for federal financial aid even though the average income of their parents is low. Students who have to pay out-of-state tuition find the situation prohibitive. Or they might need to work full-time throughout their college careers, perhaps skipping quarters or semesters due to financial constraints.

Qualifying more of these students sooner for in-state tuition increases the success rate for these students.

Fortunately, the Maryland Legislature has allowed for undocumented students to qualify for in-state tuition. However, the requirements for qualification stated that the individual's parent or guardian must show two years of Maryland income taxes to receive the exemption. This would make certain students unable to qualify. This bill adds an alternative of providing other official documentation as determined by the public institution of higher education in order to qualify.

Experience in the states that have adopted tuition equity laws or policies suggests that such policies help U.S. citizens and immigrants of all statuses, by reducing the high school drop-out rates, increasing the number of graduates who pursue a college degree, raising student incomes and tax contributions, and yielding an array of other economic and social benefits.

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