

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
January 28, 2026

**SB 212 - Higher Education - Nonresident Tuition - Exemption for Dependents of State or
Local Public Safety Employees (Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)**

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, supports **SB 212** with amendments. MACC strongly supports the goal of this legislation to ensure that the dependent children of State and local public safety employees who lose their lives in the line of duty are able to pursue higher education without facing financial barriers based on residency status, and views this as an important way for the State to honor the sacrifice of these families.

Maryland's community colleges serve many students from families who have dedicated their lives to public service, and MACC fully agrees that these students should receive meaningful and reliable educational support. Ensuring access to affordable higher education for the children of fallen public safety employees promotes equity, educational attainment, and long-term economic stability for families who have already borne an extraordinary loss.

While MACC is strongly supportive of the intent of SB 212, we respectfully recommend that this benefit be implemented through the existing Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program rather than as a separate tuition exemption. The Conroy Scholarship Program was specifically designed to serve the families of fallen public safety and military personnel and provides a well-established, equitable, and transparent framework for delivering educational benefits, while also promoting clarity for families and simplifying administration for institutions and the State.

Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **SB 212** with **AMENDMENTS** to incorporate this benefit into the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program. MACC appreciates the sponsor's leadership on this important issue and looks forward to working collaboratively to ensure this benefit is delivered in the most effective and sustainable way possible.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.