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January 26, 2026

VIA EMAIL

State Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chairman
Education, Energy & Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building, Room 2
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support of SB0208 -Higher Education - Religious Educational Institutions -
Certificate of Approval

Dear Chairman Feldman and Senate Committee Members:

First, thank you for your service to the Maryland public on policy and legal issues that impact us the most, especially on matters of education, energy and the environment.

I am writing in support of SB208, a bill to permit religious institutions that received an exemption from the Maryland Higher Education Commission before January 1, 2013 when the state legislature changed the requirements for **religious exempt institutions who are accredited. The change nullified religious exemption for accredited institutions and required the institutions to seek state certification.**

As Chairman of the Board of Trustees and a former student of Maple Springs Baptist Bible College & Seminary, a religious institution that initially received its Maryland state certification as a religious institution on October 20, 1989, Maple Springs has been a foundational and educational stalwart for many pastors, ministers and lay leadership in the state and District of Columbia and Virginia. What distinguishes this institution from all other so-called theological institutions is that non-sectarian courses solely Bible-based. The institution over its 40-year history remains unapologetic in its Christian worldview and instruction. It's sole mission is to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Maple Springs has been the only religious institution that provides a great sectarian education at an affordable price. With the rising costs of post-secondary education and increases in the daily cost of living (food and groceries prices for example), having an affordable post-secondary option is refreshing and necessary.

Celebrating its 40th year of existence this year, Maple Springs wants to continue its great tradition by operating as originally certified by the state.

Please support SB0208 by voting favorably out of this Committee.

Sincerely,

/s/ TAMARA DAVIS BROWN