

SB0657_MACC_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Drew Jabin

Position: FAV

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

March 11, 2026

SB 657 - Legislative Scholarship Programs - Eligibility and Use - Real Estate Appraisal Program**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland's 16 community colleges, supports **SB 657**. Establishing the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program will expand access to a professional field that plays a critical role in housing markets and property valuation across the State.

Maryland's community colleges frequently serve as the entry point for individuals pursuing professional licensure and career pathways that require specialized coursework, certifications, or training programs. These institutions provide accessible and affordable educational opportunities for students seeking to enter the workforce quickly while developing industry-recognized skills.

The PAREA Grant Program helps remove financial barriers for individuals seeking to enter the real estate appraisal profession, particularly for those living in historically redlined neighborhoods and underrepresented communities. Expanding access to these career opportunities supports both workforce development and broader efforts to strengthen fairness and transparency within the appraisal profession.

By helping more individuals access training and licensure opportunities, SB 657 strengthens the pipeline of qualified professionals while promoting greater diversity within the field. Community colleges are well positioned to support these pathways through coursework, continuing education, and workforce training programs that prepare students for licensure and long-term career advancement. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **SB 657**.

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

Appraisal Institute Favorable on SB 657.pdf

Uploaded by: Scott DiBiasio

Position: FAV



200 W. Madison
Suite 2630
Chicago, IL 60606

T (312) 335-4100
F (312) 335-4400
www.appraisalinstitute.org

FAVORABLE ON SB 657

Maryland Higher Education Commission – Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal
(PAREA) Grant Program – Established

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

March 11, 2026

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

The Appraisal Institute appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in **support of Senate Bill 657**, which would establish a Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program administered by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to support individuals pursuing careers in real estate appraisal.

The Appraisal Institute is the nation's largest professional association of real estate appraisers and a leading provider of professional education and training for the appraisal profession. We are also an approved provider of the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) program, which was developed by the Appraiser Qualifications Board (AQB) as an alternative pathway to obtain the experience required for appraiser licensure.

The Appraisal Institute supports the intent of SB 657 to expand access to the appraisal profession and to create new pathways for individuals to enter the field. For many years, the traditional experience model, where trainees must find a supervising appraiser willing and able to provide thousands of hours of experience, has served as a significant barrier to entry, particularly for communities of color. PAREA was created to address this issue by allowing aspiring appraisers to gain required experience through a structured, technology-enabled program that replicates real-world appraisal assignments under standardized oversight.

Programs that help individuals access PAREA training can play an important role in addressing workforce challenges in the appraisal profession. The number of licensed and certified appraisers has declined significantly over the past decade, and many regions of the country, including parts of Maryland, are experiencing shortages of residential appraisers. By lowering barriers to entry and supporting education and training opportunities, programs such as the one contemplated in SB 657 can help strengthen the pipeline of future appraisers.

The Appraisal Institute also recognizes and appreciates the bill's goal of expanding opportunities for individuals from historically underrepresented communities to enter the appraisal profession. Increasing awareness of the profession and improving access to training opportunities are important steps toward building a broader and more diverse pipeline of future appraisers.

As the Committee considers SB 657, collaboration among the Maryland Higher Education Commission, PAREA providers, professional organizations, and Maryland's appraisal regulatory community will be important to ensure the program is structured in a practical and workable



manner and aligns with the Appraiser Qualifications Board's PAREA requirements and Maryland's appraiser licensing framework. The Appraisal Institute would welcome the opportunity to work with the sponsor and the Committee as this legislation moves forward to help ensure the program is implemented effectively, supports grant recipients in successfully completing approved PAREA programs and obtaining licensure, and contributes to the long-term development of Maryland's appraisal workforce.

For these reasons, the Appraisal Institute respectfully urges the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 657.

Thank you for your consideration.

Submitted by:

Scott DiBiasio
Director of Government Affairs
Appraisal Institute
sdibiasio@appraisalinstitute.org
(202) 298-5593

SB0657sponsor testimony3.11final.pdf

Uploaded by: Senator Shaneka Henson

Position: FAV

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 203
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3578
800-492-7122 Ext. 3578
Shaneka.Henson@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR TESTIMONY

**SB0657 - Maryland Higher Education Commission –
Practical Applications of the Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program**

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Committee Members

For the record, I am Shaneka Henson, representing District 30 in Anne Arundel County and member of the JPR Committee. It is my privilege to present SB0657 - which establishes the **Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program** within the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

SB0657 takes a targeted and practical approach to addressing documented gaps in the profession of real estate appraisal by focusing on **historically redlined neighborhoods and underrepresented communities**. The bill explicitly states that the purpose of the program is to:

1. Assist in closing appraisal gaps in these communities,
2. Award grants to minorities residing in these communities who seek to pursue PAREA, and
3. Diversify the appraisal field.

Access to accurate and equitable property appraisal is essential for community stability, fair lending, homeownership, and generational wealth building. When appraisal gaps persist, they can negatively affect property values and limit economic opportunity. By supporting individuals from underrepresented communities in completing **Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA)**, this bill addresses both workforce diversity and systemic inequities at the same time.

SB0657 also wisely places administration of the program with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, ensuring oversight by an established state entity with experience managing grant programs and educational pathways.

Importantly, this legislation does not mandate participation or impose new regulatory burdens. Instead, it creates an opportunity-based grant program designed to strengthen the appraisal profession while improving outcomes in communities that have historically been underserved.

After hearing from our representatives, and for these reasons, I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 657 and help advance a program that promotes fairness, professional access, and economic equity across Maryland.

SB 657

Uploaded by: Ufuoma O. Agarin, J.D.

Position: FAV



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3185 • 800-492-7122 Ext. 3185 • Black.Caucus@house.state.md.us

March 11, 2026

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Chair

Delegate Jheanelle Wilkins, District 20

1st Vice Chair

Delegate Melissa Wells, District 40

2nd Vice Chair

Delegate Karen R. Toles, District 25

Treasurer

Delegate Marlon Amprey, District 40

Secretary

Delegate Jamila J. Woods, District 26

Financial Secretary

Senator Arthur Ellis, District 28

Chaplain

Delegate Jeffrie E. Long, Jr., District 27B

Parliamentarian

Delegate Stephanie Smith, District 45

Historian

Delegate Cheryl E. Pasteur, District 11A

Executive Director

Ufuoma O. Agarin, J.D.

MEMBERS

Senator Malcolm Augustine, District 47
Senator Benjamin Brooks, District 10
Senator Nick Charles, District 25
Senator Antonio L. Hayes, District 40
Senator Shaneka Henson, District 30
Senator Carl Jackson, District 8
Senator Michael A. Jackson, District 27
Senator Cory V. McCray, District 45
Senator C. Anthony Muse, District 26
Senator William C. Smith, Jr., District 20
Senator Charles E. Sydnor III, Esq., District 22
Senator Alonzo T. Washington, District 22
Senator Mary L. Washington, District 43
Senator Ron Watson, District 23
Delegate Gabriel Acevero, District 39
Delegate Jacqueline T. Addison, District 45
Delegate Tiffany Alston, District 24
Delegate Vanessa E. Atterberry, District 13
Delegate J. Sandy Bartlett, District 32
Delegate Adrian Boate, District 23
Delegate Regina T. Boyce, District 43A
Delegate Frank M. Conaway, Jr., District 40
Delegate Charlotte Crutchfield, District 19
Delegate Debra Davis, District 28
Delegate Diana M. Fennell, District 47A
Delegate Kevin M. Harris, District 27A
Delegate Andrea Fletcher Harrison, District 24
Delegate Terri L. Hill, District 12
Delegate Marvin E. Holmes, Jr., District 23
Delegate Julian Ivey, District 47A
Delegate Andre V. Johnson, Jr., District 34A
Delegate Adrienne A. Jones, District 10
Delegate Jazz Lewis, District 24
Delegate Robbyn Lewis, District 46
Delegate Ashanti Martinez, District 22
Delegate Alethia McCaskill, District 44B
Delegate Bernice Mireku-North, District 14
Delegate LaToya Nkongolo, District 31
Delegate Edith J. Patterson, District 28
Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnik, District 21
Delegate N. Scott Phillips, District 10
Delegate Pamela Queen, District 14
Delegate Kent Raberson, District 25
Delegate Denise G. Roberts, District 25
Delegate Mike Rogers, District 32
Delegate Malcolm P. Ruff, District 41
Delegate Gary Simmons, District 12B
Delegate Deni Tavaras, District 47B
Delegate Kym Taylor, District 23
Delegate Veronica Turner, District 26
Delegate Jennifer White Holland, District 10
Delegate Nicole A. Williams, District 22
Delegate C.T. Wilson, District 28
Delegate Greg Wims, District 39
Delegate Caylin Young, District 45

Chair Brian J. Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee,

Dear Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for Senate Bill 657 (SB 657) – Maryland Higher Education Commission - Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program - Established. This bill establishes the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program, which will provide financial assistance to individuals from historically redlined and underrepresented communities seeking to become licensed real estate appraisers. By addressing systemic disparities in property valuation and promoting diversity in the appraisal industry, SB 657 is a critical step toward economic justice and equity for Black Marylanders. **This bill is a 2026 legislative priority for the Black Caucus.**

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly believes that economic empowerment and property ownership are essential to addressing long-standing racial wealth disparities. Black Marylanders have historically been subject to discriminatory housing practices, including redlining, which has contributed to undervaluation of Black-owned homes and diminished opportunities for wealth accumulation. According to a 2022 Brookings Institution study, homes in majority-Black neighborhoods are undervalued by an average of \$48,000 compared to similar homes in white neighborhoods, resulting in a cumulative loss of \$156 billion in home equity nationwide. These disparities persist today, with fewer than 5% of appraisers nationwide identifying as Black—despite African Americans making up over 30% of Maryland's population.

SB 657 seeks to close these appraisal gaps by providing grants to minority individuals in historically redlined neighborhoods, allowing them to complete the PAREA program and obtain the necessary qualifications to become real estate appraisers. Increasing the number of Black appraisers will help ensure more accurate and fair property valuations in Black communities, protecting Black

homeowners from low appraisals that can strip away generational wealth and limit refinancing opportunities.

In Maryland, data from the Urban Institute shows that Black households have half the median net worth of white households, and the homeownership gap remains stark. A 2021 Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development report found that Black Marylanders are twice as likely to be denied home loans compared to white applicants, reinforcing the need for systemic change in property valuation and access to financial resources. By equipping more Black appraisers with the necessary training and certification, SB 657 addresses these inequities and ensures a more representative and fair real estate industry.

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports SB 657 and its efforts to address systemic racial disparities in property valuation, increase Black representation in real estate appraisal, and promote economic justice. We urge your support for SB 657, as it offers a thoughtful and proactive approach to reducing the racial wealth gap and ensuring that Black Marylanders have fair access to property ownership and financial security.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports Senate Bill 657.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland

SB 657 Letter of Information.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen King-Sheridan

Position: INFO



March 9, 2026

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on Senate Bill 657 – Maryland Higher Education Commission - Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program - Established, sponsored by Senator Henson. MHEC sincerely thanks Senator Henson for this legislation and its goal. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) submitted this letter to outline implementation and statutory considerations related to the bill.

Senate Bill 657 establishes the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) Grant Program within MHEC. This legislation represents a critical investment in diversifying Maryland's appraisal profession and promoting economic equity in historically underserved communities.

The real estate appraisal field has historically faced significant diversity gaps, largely due to a "who you know" entry model that requires trainees to find an existing supervisor willing to provide over 1,000 hours of training. Senate Bill 657 directly addresses this by providing grants to students to pursue the PAREA pathway.

PAREA is a revolutionary virtual simulation that allows candidates to fulfill their experience requirements through merit-based training rather than personal industry connections. By establishing a grant program specifically to fund this experiential learning, SB657 achieves several vital goals:

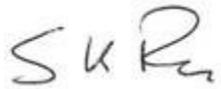
- Closing the Appraisal Gap: It assists in addressing appraisal disparities that occur in historically redlined and underrepresented neighborhoods.
- Targeted Financial Support: It provides the necessary funding for minority residents in these communities to access high-quality, simulated training that replaces traditional gatekeeping barriers.
- Diversifying the Field: It creates a direct, state-supported mechanism to ensure the appraisal profession reflects the diversity of Maryland's homeowners and communities.

Our recent collaborative efforts with the Maryland Real Estate Commission and the community colleges have laid the groundwork for a robust appraisal pipeline. Senate Bill 657 provides the

targeted financial resources necessary to ensure that this pipeline is accessible to those who have been historically excluded from the profession.

This legislation is not only a workforce development tool but also a significant step toward housing equity in Maryland. MHEC looks forward to the continued collaboration to ensure the program is implemented in a way that upholds its intent and long-term success.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Sanjay Rai in black ink.

Sanjay Rai, Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission