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Position: FAV

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
April 1, 2026

**HB 900 - 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 **HB 900**. This legislation expands the flexibility of existing legislative scholarship programs by allowing scholarship funds to support students pursuing the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal Program and related licensure requirements.

Maryland's community colleges provide numerous career and workforce training programs that lead directly to professional certification or licensure. These programs offer accessible and affordable pathways for students seeking to enter high-demand professions without necessarily pursuing a traditional four-year degree. Ensuring that financial aid programs recognize and support these workforce-focused educational pathways is essential to meeting the State's evolving labor market needs.

HB 900 appropriately recognizes that many career pathways require specialized training, certification programs, and professional licensure that fall outside of traditional degree structures. Community colleges frequently serve as the entry point for these programs, providing the coursework, instruction, and preparation needed for students to meet professional standards and licensing requirements.

By allowing legislative scholarship funds to support participation in the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal Program, this bill expands educational opportunity while strengthening workforce pipelines in a field that plays an important role in Maryland's housing and real estate sectors. The legislation also reinforces the role of community colleges as flexible providers of career-focused training that responds directly to industry demand. Accordingly, MACC urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report on **HB 900**.

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

HB 900_Signed.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen King-Sheridan

Position: FAV



April 1, 2026

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

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

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 900 – Legislative Scholarship Programs - Eligibility and Use - Real Estate Appraisal Program.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission strongly supports House Bill 900, which seeks to modernize the eligibility and use of Maryland's legislative scholarship programs by including the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) program. This legislation is a vital step toward diversifying the appraisal profession and removing the systemic barriers that have historically limited entry into this field.

The current path to becoming a licensed appraiser in Maryland is heavily dependent on a "who you know" model, requiring trainees to secure 1,000 to 1,500 hours of experience under a certified supervisor. Because the profession is largely self-employed, many appraisers are disincentivized to train potential future competitors. This bottleneck disproportionately impacts underrepresented communities and younger Marylanders who lack existing professional networks in the industry.

HB 900 addresses these challenges by:

- **Expanding Access to PAREA:** By authorizing the use of Senatorial and Delegate scholarships for PAREA registration and expenses, the State empowers students to utilize virtual, merit-based simulations to fulfill experience requirements.
- **Removing Gatekeeping Barriers:** Including PAREA in legislative scholarship eligibility allows students to complete the necessary experience to be eligible for licensure rather than their personal connections to existing supervisors.

- Exempting Examination Hurdles: The bill exempts applicants planning to complete PAREA from certain senatorial scholarship examination requirements, recognizing the technical and vocational nature of this specialized license.

Over the past several months, leadership from MHEC, the Maryland Real Estate Commission, and our community college system has worked collaboratively to build a "High School to Licensure" pipeline. HB 900 provides the necessary legislative framework to fund this pipeline through existing resources, ensuring that Maryland leads the nation in creating an equitable and robust real estate appraisal workforce. By supporting HB 900, we can ensure that a career in appraisal is accessible to all Marylanders, thereby strengthening our housing market and promoting economic equity in historically underserved neighborhoods. I respectfully urge a favorable report on House Bill 900.

Sincerely,



Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Interim Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission

Appraisal Institute Favorable on HB 900 - Senate E

Uploaded by: Scott DiBiasio

Position: FAV



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FAVORABLE ON HB 900

Legislative Scholarship Programs – Eligibility and Use – Real Estate Appraisal Program

Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

April 1, 2026

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

The Appraisal Institute respectfully submits this testimony in **support of House Bill 900**, which would allow Maryland's legislative scholarship programs to be used for expenses associated with completing the Practical Applications of Real Estate Appraisal (PAREA) program and related appraiser qualification requirements.

The Appraisal Institute is the nation's largest professional association of real estate appraisers and a leading provider of education and training for the appraisal profession. The Institute is also an approved provider of the PAREA program established by the Appraiser Qualifications Board (AQB) of The Appraisal Foundation.

HB 900 represents a practical and forward-looking step to broaden access to the appraisal profession. The bill recognizes that the pathway to becoming a licensed real estate appraiser involves specialized education, training, and experience requirements that often fall outside traditional degree programs. By allowing legislative scholarships to support participation in PAREA, the bill ensures that Maryland's financial aid programs can be used to support students pursuing professional licensure in the valuation field.

PAREA was developed by the AQB as an alternative to the traditional apprenticeship model for gaining the experience hours required for appraiser licensure. Historically, aspiring appraisers have been required to locate a supervising appraiser willing and able to provide training and oversight for thousands of hours of appraisal work. In many markets this has proven to be a significant barrier to entry. PAREA addresses this challenge by allowing candidates to complete structured, mentored appraisal assignments within a standardized training environment that replicates real-world appraisal practice.

Expanding the allowable uses of legislative scholarships to include PAREA participation will help ensure that individuals who wish to pursue appraisal careers have access to the same types of financial support available to students in other professional and technical fields. This approach also reflects the evolving nature of professional training programs, which increasingly rely on competency-based and practice-based education rather than traditional academic degree pathways.

Maryland, like much of the country, faces a declining number of licensed and certified real estate appraisers. Many experienced appraisers are approaching retirement, while fewer individuals are entering the profession due in part to barriers associated with the traditional training model.



Policies that make it easier for qualified individuals to obtain the required education and experience will help strengthen the appraisal workforce and support the availability of valuation services that are essential to the residential mortgage market and broader real estate economy.

House Bill 900 appropriately recognizes PAREA as a legitimate pathway for meeting federal appraiser qualification requirements and allows Maryland's existing legislative scholarship program to support individuals pursuing this training. By integrating appraisal training into the state's broader financial aid framework, the legislation promotes workforce development while expanding access to a profession that plays a critical role in the real estate finance system.

The Appraisal Institute appreciates the Committee's consideration of this legislation and urges a **Favorable Report on HB 900** as a meaningful step toward improving access to appraisal education and training in Maryland.

Submitted by:

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