



House Bill 27

Education - Community Colleges - Collective Bargaining

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

Date: March 29, 2016

To: Finance Committee

From: Robin Clark Eilenberg

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 27. This bill would establish a uniform statewide collective bargaining process for community college employees.

Counties oppose the one-size-fits-all approach of HB 27, which limits local decision-making. The move to collective bargaining outlined in this bill could create potentially unsustainable costs for counties, who necessarily provide substantial funding for community colleges throughout Maryland.

In addition, despite counties' role in supporting community colleges, this legislation would not provide any opportunity for county governments to participate in collective bargaining negotiations. The combination of these effects – State-imposed system and costs, no county participation in bargaining, and no additional State funding – results in a potentially substantial unfunded mandate on county governments.

Current state laws include distinct collective bargaining processes for community colleges in several jurisdictions. Several colleges already have some locally-authorized collective bargaining. The amended version of the bill allows for collective bargaining contracts at those colleges to continue only until they expire. After that point, the existing systems must be repealed and substituted for the far more detailed and restrictive collective bargaining process required by the legislation.

As partners in the network of community colleges serving the states' residents, county governments reserve the ability to have input into potentially costly shifts in community college administration. Because this legislation would not provide local flexibility in the decision to allow collective bargaining at county community colleges, MACo **OPPOSES** HB 27 and recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report.