



## House Bill 527

### *Higher Education – Maryland Technology Internship Program – Alterations*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: February 8, 2018

From: Kevin Kinnally

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 527. This bill enables counties to participate in the Maryland Technology Internship program.

Currently, the Maryland Technology Internship Program connects college and university students, recent graduates, and veterans with small innovative businesses in the high-growth technology sector through internships. The Program incentivizes businesses to participate by offering a stipend of up to 50% for each paid intern.

HB 527 would expand the current Program by authorizing the State and local governments to participate in the same way as technology-based businesses. In order to qualify for the program, participants must commit to hosting an intern for a minimum of 120 hours during a spring, fall, or summer semester, provide a detailed description of a technology-based intern position, and provide proof that a representative has attended an orientation or training program provided or approved by the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC).

Counties are invested in having strong and vibrant economies. A robust, well-trained, and educated workforce encourages businesses to locate to and grow in Maryland. This bill helps encourage high-achieving students at Maryland institutions of higher education to remain in the state after graduation.

The bill properly leaves the decision for establishing a program in the hands of local governments, who are best situated to determine whether a program is in their best interest. If a program is established, it requires both the county and the State to split the costs for paid interns, disbursing financial burdens and ensuring that the State is equally invested in the advancement of its students and workforce.

Counties support and encourage efforts to incentivize and strengthen internship programs that promote a strong and competent workforce. Accordingly, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 527.