



## **House Bill 894**

### *Education - Community Colleges - Collective Bargaining*

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: February 10, 2021

From: Drew Jabin

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 894. This bill would establish a uniform statewide collective bargaining process for community college employees.

Counties oppose the one-size-fits-all approach of HB 894, which limits local decision-making. The move to collective bargaining outlined in this bill could create potentially unsustainable costs for counties, who provide substantial funding for community colleges throughout Maryland—especially since the legislation does not envision any added State support. Moreover, this bill will lead to increased tuition costs at a time when training and education opportunities are most needed.

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 – is simply not affordable as a statewide county mandate and could present substantial budget difficulties.

Current state laws include distinct collective bargaining processes for community colleges in several jurisdictions. Several colleges already have some locally-authorized collective bargaining. This 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 After that point, the existing systems must be repealed and substituted for the far more detailed and restrictive collective bargaining process required by HB 894.

As partners in the network of community colleges serving the state's 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 894 and recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report.